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A
PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL
HISTORY
OF THE
SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE
OF THE
EUROPEANS
IN THE
EAST AND WEST INDIES.

BY THE ABBE RAYNAL.

WITH A

New Set of Maps adapted to the Work, and a copious Index.

Volume fourth.

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BOOK XI.

THE EUROPEANS GO INTO AFRICA TO PURCHASE SLAVES
TO CULTIVATE THE CARIBBEE ISLANDS. THE MANNER
OF CONDUCTING THIS SPECIES OF COMMERCE. PRODUCE
ARISING FROM THE LABOUR OF THE SLAVES.

WE have seen immense countries invaded and laid waste ; their innocent and peaceable inhabitants either massacred or loaded with chains ; a dreadful solitude established upon the ruins of a numerous population ; ferocious usurpers destroying one another, and heaping their dead bodies upon those of their victims. What is to be the result of so many enormities ? They will still be repeated, and they will be followed by one, which, though it may not produce so much bloodshed, will nevertheless be more shocking to humanity : this is the traffic of man, sold and purchased by his fellow-creature. The islands of America have first suggested the idea of this abominable trade, and we shall now see in what manner this misfortune hath been brought about.

Certain restless fugitives, the greatest part of whom had either been disgraced by the laws of their country, or ruined by their excesses, in this state of desperation, formed a

A

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The Europeans settled in the American islands procure cultivators from Africa.

design of attacking Spanish or Portuguese ships that were richly laden with the spoils of the New World. Some desert islands, whose situation insured success to these piracies, served at first for a place of rendezvous to these robbers; and soon became their country. Habituated to murder, they meditated the massacre of a plain and unsuspecting people, who had received and treated them with humanity; and the civilized nations, of which these free-booters were the refuse, adopted this infamous scheme without hesitation; which was immediately put in execution. It then became necessary to consider what advantages might accrue from so many enormities. Gold and silver, which were still looked upon as the sole valuable productions to be derived from America, had either never existed in several of these new acquisitions, or were no longer to be found there in sufficient quantities to expect any considerable emoluments from working the mines. Certain speculative men, less blinded by their prejudices than the multitude generally are, imagined, that a soil and climate, so totally different from ours, might either furnish us with commodities to which we were strangers, or which we were obliged to purchase at an exorbitant price: they therefore determined to apply themselves to the culture of them. There were some obstacles, apparently insurmountable, to the execution of this plan. The ancient inhabitants of the country were now entirely destroyed; and had they not been so, the weakness of their constitutions, their habit of ease and indolence, and their invincible aversion for labour, would scarce have rendered them fit instruments to execute the designs of their oppressors. These barbarians too, born in a temperate clime, could not support the laborious works of agriculture under a burning and unwholesome sky. Self-interest, ever fruitful in expedients, suggested the plan of seeking cultivators in Africa, a country in which the abominable and inhuman custom of selling its inhabitants hath ever prevailed.

Africa is an immense region, connected to Asia only by a narrow neck of land of twenty leagues, called the isthmus of Suez. This natural and political boundary must sooner or later be broken down by the ocean, from that tendency it is observed to have of forming gulfs and straits eastward. This peninsula, cut by the equator into two un-

equal parts, forms an irregular triangle, one of the sides of which fronts the east, the other the north, and the third the west.

THE eastern side, which extends from Suez nearly as far as the Cape of Good Hope, is washed by the Red sea and the ocean. The inland parts of the country are but little known, and what has been discovered of them can neither excite the mercenary views of the trader, the curiosity of the traveller, nor the humanity of the philosopher. Even the missionaries, after having made some progress in these countries, especially in Abyssinia, totally discouraged by the treatment they met with, have abandoned these people to their inconstancy and perfidy. The coasts are in general only dreadful rocks, or a waste of dry and burning sand. Those portions which are fit for cultivation, are parcelled out among the natives of the country, the Arabs, the Portuguese, and the Dutch. Their commerce, which consists only in a little ivory or gold, and some slaves, is connected with that of the East Indies.

Opinions concerning the eastern coast of Africa.

The northern side, which extends from the isthmus of Suez to the straits of Gibraltar, is bounded by the Mediterranean. On this side, nine hundred leagues of coast are occupied by a country, which hath for several centuries been known by the name of Barbary; and by Egypt, which is under the yoke of the Ottoman empire.

THIS great province is bounded by the Red sea on the east, by Nubia on the south, by the deserts of Barca, or by Lybia on the west, and on the north by the Mediterranean. It is about two hundred and twelve leagues long from north to south. A break of rocks, and a chain of mountains, running almost in the same direction, prevent it from being more than six or seven leagues broad as far as Cairo. From that capital to the sea the country describes a triangle, the basis of which is one hundred leagues. This triangle includes another, known by the name of Delta, and formed by two branches of the Nile, which empty

Opinions concerning the northern coast of Africa, and of Egypt in particular.

themselves into the Mediterranean, one of them at the distance of a league from Rosetto, and the other of two from Damietta.

Although this be a burning region, yet the climate is in general healthy; the only infirmity peculiar to Egypt is, the too frequent loss of sight. This calamity is thought to be occasioned by a fine kind of sand, which is scattered about in May and June by the south winds. Would it not be more reasonable to attribute it to the custom those people have of sleeping in the open air nine months in the year? This opinion will be readily admitted, since it is observed, that those who pass the night in their houses, or under tents, seldom experience so great a misfortune.

There are few countries on the face of the globe so fruitful as Egypt. The soil yields annually three crops, which require but one tillage. Vegetables succeed corn, and these are followed by pot-herbs; this happy fertility is owing to the Nile.

That river, the source of which is in Ethiopia, owes its increase to clouds, which falling down in rain, occasion its periodical swell. It begins in the month of June, and augments till the end of September, at which time it gradually decreases. Its waters, after having traversed an immense space without dividing, are separated five leagues above Cairo, into two branches, which meet no more.

A country, however, where nothing is so seldom met with as a spring, and where rain is an extraordinary phenomenon, could only have been fertilized by the Nile. Accordingly, from times of the most remote antiquity, four-score considerable canals were digged at the entrance of the kingdom, beside a great number of small ones, which distributed these waters all over Egypt. Except five or six of the deepest, they are all dry at the beginning, or towards the middle of winter; but then the soil no longer requires watering. If it should happen, that the river hath not swelled to the height of four hundred inches, the lower grounds are only watered. The others, to which their wells, constructed with swing-gates, or with wheels, become useless, are considered as barren, and freed for that year of all imposts.

The grounds are divided into three classes. That which is considered as the first of them, is the one which forms the

wakoups, or domain allotted to the mosques, or other religious establishments. It is the worst cultivated of any of the grounds, and that which is more spared in the taxes by an ignorant and superstitious government.

The principal civil and military officers of the state enjoy the profits of the second class. They leave very little to the bondsmen, who till the grounds with the sweat of their brows; and they seldom pay into the treasury the taxes they are indebted to it.

The third class is divided between a greater number of plain citizens, whose possessions, more or less extensive, are cultivated by active and intelligent farmers. These grounds compose the wealth of Egypt, and become the resource of the public treasury.

Though one third of the grounds be left untilld, yet the country is not depopulated. It is reckoned to contain five or six millions of inhabitants, the most numerous of which are the Cophts, who derive their origin from the ancient Egyptians, to whom they have no small share of resemblance. Some of them have submitted to the yoke of the koran, the rest have remained subject to the gospel. They occupy, almost exclusively, all the Upper Egypt, and are very numerous in the Lower; several of them are cultivators, but more of them profess the arts. The most intelligent among them superintend the affairs of rich families, or serve as secretaries to men in office. When they have obtained these posts, which are deemed honourable, they soon acquire an absolute sway over masters enervated by the climate and by luxury. This kind of power soon leads them to the possession of wealth, which they generally squander in the most infamous excesses. If motives of avarice should have made them abstain from the pursuit of pleasure, they are deprived of their riches before the close of a turbulent life, by the tyrants whom they had deceived. Children are scarce ever known to inherit the fortune of their fathers.

The most numerous race after the Cophts, is that of the Arabs. These descendants of a people, who were formerly a conquering nation, all live in a state of the utmost ignominy. In this abject condition, their actions are never animated with spirit, and they have never been known to take any part in the revolutions with which this country is so frequently agitated. Their masters consider them only in

the light of animals that are necessary for cultivation. Their lives and their fortunes are arbitrarily disposed of, while these acts of injustice and cruelty have never brought down the vengeance of government upon the offenders. These unfortunate people have a particular dress, they dwell in the fields, intermarry with one another, and scarce live upon any thing but vegetables and milk. If there be any among them who are able to indulge in a few conveniencies, they would not dare to do it, from the apprehension of exposing themselves to the risk of being taken notice of, which might, sooner or later, become fatal to them.

The remainder of the population is composed of Turks, Jews, and Armenians, and of men of divers countries and sects, who have successively settled in Egypt. Those foreigners, whatever be the reason of it, seldom leave a numerous posterity, and their descendants are not more fortunate. This humiliating sterility, however, is chiefly observed among the Mamelucs.

In vain have these Circassians, or Georgians, been chosen in their youth from among the most healthy men in their provinces. In vain have the most beautiful wives of their country been bestowed upon them. In vain have they been all kept in a state of plenty, freed from the apprehensions of want, and from every anxiety. Scarce any children issue from these well-adapted connections, and the few that are born die within the year. Only two families are known to be the descendants of this race, and they have yet reached no further than to the second generation.

The government of Egypt differs from every other. Before the invasion of the Turks, this region was under the sway of a chief, who was chosen by soldiers, all born in slavery, and who shared his authority with him. Selim would undoubtedly have been desirous to submit this new conquest to the same despotism as his other provinces; but circumstances were not favourable to this ambitious design. He was obliged to content himself with the rights of the dethroned foldan, and to leave his haughty lieutenants in possession of the prerogatives they had for so long a time enjoyed. The sultan sent into Egypt fourteen thousand of his best troops, in order to counterbalance this formidable militia. Far from attending to the interests of the Porte, this corps employed themselves only about their own. They

soon acquired sufficient influence to have every thing determined by their caprice; and they maintained the ascendancy they had gained, till growing effeminate by the climate, they were no longer able to maintain a power which was not fixed on any kind of basis. It passed again into the hands of the Mamelucs, and that in a more extensive manner than ever.

This singular dynasty is composed of ten or twelve thousand slaves, brought from Georgia and Circassia when they were very young. They enter into the service of the great men of their nation, who have, like them, been all in a state of slavery, and who, sooner or later, give them their freedom. These freedmen are observed to rise from one post to another, till they attain to the rank of bey, which is the highest of all.

These beys govern the twenty-four provinces of the kingdom. Their number seldom exceeds sixteen or seventeen, because the most resolute among them are in possession of more than one government, and because some feeble districts of Upper Egypt have been intrusted to Arabian chiefs from time immemorial. Although they ought all to be of equal rank, the bey who governs the capital most commonly assumes an authority over the rest, unless he be supplanted by some one of his colleagues, richer, more powerful, or more artful, than himself. But whether the equilibrium be maintained or not, the free Turks never obtain any but civil or ecclesiastical employments. The military dignities, the offices of government, and all the highest honours, are destined only for those who have lived in servitude. The divan, which is composed of the beys and of their creatures, is the real sovereign. The pacha, who represents the sultan, receives homage, and orders are even given in his name; but they are dictated to him by insolent slaves. If he should refuse to do what is required of him, he is deposed, and leads a retired life, till the seraglio hath either sentenced him to death or recalled him.

The Mamelucs constitute the real force of Egypt. As they are all born in either a rough or a temperate climate, and as they have received an austere education, they form different troops of cavalry, which are divided among the beys, in proportion to the degree of influence, or the ambition of those chiefs, and the greater or less estimation

they are holden in. These powerful men dispose of the Turkish infantry in a manner almost as absolute. This infantry is effeminate, and hath entirely lost its military spirit. It is scarce composed of any but peaceable tradesmen, who cause their names to be registered, in order to enjoy the prerogatives attached to the name of a soldier. But whatever it may be, its officers are entirely dependent upon the beys, without whose protection they would not be able to obtain promotion.

Beside the contributions in kind, which are sent as an offering from the grand signior to Mecca and Medina, which he causes to be distributed among the troops, several imposts are raised in coin. The lands pay a tribute, and the christians a poll-tax. The monopoly of cassia, fenna, and sal-ammoniac, is sold very dear. The customs produce a great deal. These objects united amount at least to ten millions of livres [416,666l. 13s. 4d.] of which there is seldom more than a fourth part conveyed to Constantinople. The chief bey retains the remainder, or divides it with colleagues, if he be not able to keep it all.

The interest of the pacha is not more attended to than that of the sultan. Even the militia seldom receive their entire pay; and citizens of all ranks are habitually plundered.

Such numerous vexations could not have been supported, had it not been for the resources derived from a very advantageous foreign trade, to which several ports are laid open. There are two in Alexandria, which formerly, it is said, communicated with each other, and are at present separated by a very narrow slip of land. The eastern, or new port, is of easier access than the other, but it is almost filled up by the ballast of the ships, which it is customary to fling into it. It is not a century since the vessels were fastened to the quay; but they are now at the distance of more than two hundred toises from it. The space which they can occupy is so narrow, that it is necessary to fix them with several anchors, to prevent their shocking each other; and even this precaution is not always sufficient. It happens very often in stormy weather, that these vessels run foul of those that are near them, and drag them along with them into flats, where they are miserably foundered together.

The western, or old harbour, is large and commodious. Men of war and merchantmen are equally secure in it; but the Europeans are excluded from it. Jealousy hath induced the Turkish navigators to invent a prophecy, which announces, that the city will fall into the hands of the christians, whenever their ships are admitted into that fine harbour.

Bequees is four leagues distant from this place. It carries on no trade; and is never frequented except when the winds prevent the ships from getting to Alexandria, or from entering the Nile. Its harbour is very small, but exceedingly good; men of war would be sheltered from all danger there even in winter.

The merchandizes which are carried down the river upon boats, that are called *macks*, and brought up again as far as the last cataract, or the southern extremity of Egypt, are landed at Rosetto, one league distant from the western mouth of the Nile. The provisions are conveyed from the town itself to the ships, which are at no great distance, upon larger boats, known in that country by the name of *germes*.

A similar staple, but infinitely more considerable, hath been formed near the eastern mouth of the river at Damietta. This, perhaps, was formerly a harbour; but at present the vessels are obliged to anchor in the open sea, at two leagues from the coast, upon a good bottom. If they are driven from thence by stormy weather, which is rather frequent in these latitudes in the winter, they take refuge in the harbours of Cyprus, from whence they return to their port when the danger is over.

Seven or eight hundred Turkish, Barbary, or Christian ships, or such as belong to the christians, which trade for these people, arrive annually in Egypt. One hundred and forty, or one hundred and fifty of them, come from Syria, seventy or fourscore from Constantinople, fifty or sixty from Smyrna, thirty or forty from Salonica, twenty-five or thirty from Candia, and all the rest from some islands, or from some parts of the continent, which are less opulent and less fruitful. Their cargoes are valued, one with another, at 30,000 livres [1250l.] If we suppose there are seven hundred and fifty vessels, the country consumes to the amount of 22,500,000 livres [937,500l.] of the productions brought by these tra-

ders. But it delivers above double that sum, in rice, coffee, flax, cloths, corn, vegetables, and in other articles. It must therefore receive 22,500,000 livres [937,500*l.*] in money.

The connections of the Europeans with Egypt are not so lucrative. The people among them by whom they are carried on, sell woollen cloths, gildings, silk stuffs, iron, lead, tin, paper, cochineal, hardware, and glass; and receive in exchange rice, coffee, saffron, ivory, gums, cotton, fenna, cassia, spun thread, and sal-ammoniac.

In 1776, the importations of the Venetians were reduced to 755,035 livres [31,459*l.* 15*s.* 10*d.*] and their exports to 820,062 livres [34,169*l.* 5*s.*] The importations of the Tuscans and the English, who trade to Leghorn, did not exceed 2,143,660 livres [89,319*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.*] nor their exports 2,099,635 livres [87,484*l.* 15*s.*] The importations of the French did not exceed 3,997,615 livres [166,567*l.* 5*s.* 10*d.*] nor their exports 3,075,450 livres [128,143*l.* 15*s.*] The total importation did not therefore amount to more than 6,896,310 livres [287,346*l.* 5*s.*] and the exportation to more than 5,995,147 livres [249,797*l.* 16*s.* 10*d.*]

All the merchandize either bought or sold by the Europeans pay a duty of three per cent. This tax amounts to six per cent. for coffee, and to ten per cent. for rice, the exportation of which is prohibited. This imposition is for the profit of two ships sent every year from the Dardanelles to guard the coasts of Egypt from the depredations of the pirates, and which are of no other use but to oppress the traders, and to encourage smuggling.

Europe employs one hundred vessels in this trade; but only fifty or sixty of them return immediately to the ports from whence they were dispatched. The others enter into the service of any people who choose to employ them in the Levant.

Summer is the most favourable season for sailing from Europe to Egypt; the voyages are shortened by the west or north winds which blow almost continually at that time. Spring and autumn are the most proper seasons for returning. The navigation is very dangerous during winter upon these coasts, which are so low, that land is not discovered at two leagues distance, if the day be in the least dark, or the sky cloudy.

If Egypt should ever emerge from the state of anarchy in which it is plunged; if an independent government should be formed there; and if the new constitution should be founded upon wise laws, that region will again become what it formerly was, one of the most industrious and fertile countries of the earth. It would be absurd to foretel the same prosperity to Lybia, which is inhabited at present by the people of Barbary.

THE early periods of this extensive country are involved in the greatest obscurity; *Revolutions in Lybia.* nor was any light thrown upon their history till the arrival of the Carthaginians. These merchants, originally of Phœnician extraction, about a hundred and thirty-seven years before the foundation of Rome, built a city, the territory of which, at first very limited, in process of time extended to all that country known by the name of the kingdom of Tunis, and afterwards much further. Spain, and the greatest part of the islands in the Mediterranean, fell under its dominion. Many other kingdoms must apparently have served to aggrandize this enormous power, when her ambitious views interfered with those of Rome. At the time of this dreadful collision, a war between these two nations was instantly kindled, and carried on with such obstinacy and fury, that it was easy to foresee it would not terminate but in the utter destruction of the one or the other. Rome, which was now in the height of its republican and patriotic principles, after many stubborn engagements, in which the greatest military skill was displayed, obtained a decisive superiority over that which was corrupted by its riches. The commercial people became the slaves of the warlike power.

The conquerors maintained themselves in the possession of their conquests, till about the middle of the fifth century. The Vandals, then hurried on by their original impetuosity beyond the limits of Spain, of which they were masters, passed the pillars of Hercules, and, like an inundation, diffused themselves over the country of Lybia. These conquerors would certainly have preserved the advantages they had acquired by their irruptions, had they kept up that military spirit which their king Genseric had inspired them with. But with this barbarian, who was not destitute of

genius, this spirit became extinct; military discipline was relaxed, and the government, which rested only on this basis, was overthrown. Belisarius surprised these people in this confusion, extirpated them, and re-established the empire in its ancient privileges. But this revolution was only momentary. Great men, who can form and bring to maturity a rising nation, cannot impart youth and vigour to an ancient and decayed people.

This is accounted for from a variety of reasons, all of them equally striking. The founder of an empire addresses himself to an inexperienced man, who is sensible of his misfortune, and disposed, by the continuance of it, to docility. He hath only to display the appearance of, and the character of benevolence, to be attended to, obeyed, and cherished. Daily experience adds to the personal confidence he inspires, and gives influence to his counsel. The superiority of his judgment is soon necessarily acknowledged. His precepts of virtue must ever acquire a greater degree of force, in proportion to the simplicity of his discipline. It is not difficult for him to depreciate vice, of which the guilty person is the first victim. He attacks openly such prejudices only as he expects to eradicate. He trusts to time for the subversion of the rest; and the success of his projects is ensured by the impossibility of discovering their tendency. His policy suggests to his imagination a variety of measures, calculated to excite astonishment and to procure him veneration. He then gives his orders, and his commands are occasionally sanctified by the authority of Heaven. He is high-priest and legislator during his life, and at his death altars are erected to him; he is invoked; he is a god. The situation of the restorer of a corrupted nation is very different. He is an architect, who proposes to build upon a space covered with ruins; he is a physician, who attempts to cure a mortified carcase; he is a wise man, who preaches reformation to a hardened people. He can expect nothing but hatred and persecution from the present, and will not live to see the future generation. He will reap few advantages, with a great deal of labour, during his life, and will obtain nothing but fruitless regret after his death. A nation is only regenerated in a sea of blood. It is the image of old Eson, whose youth Medea could renew by no other mode, except that of cutting him to pieces and boiling him. It is not in

the power of one man to raise a fallen nation. It appears that this must be the result of a long series of revolutions. The man of genius doth not live long enough, and leaves no successors.

In the seventh century, the Saracens, formidable in their institutions and their success, armed with the sword and with the koran, obliged the Romans, weakened by their divisions, to repass the seas, and augmented with the accession of the northern part of Africa, that vast dominion Mohammed had just founded with so much glory. The lieutenants of the caliphs afterwards deprived their masters of these rich spoils, and erected the provinces intrusted to their care into independent states.

This division, with respect to strength and power, inspired the Turks with the ambition of making themselves masters of this territory. Their success was perhaps more rapid than they had expected; but a new revolution soon reduced these considerable conquests to very trifling advantages.

The pachas, or viceroys, intrusted with the care of the conquered countries, carried along with them that spirit of rapine, of which their nation had left such indelible traces. They were not the people alone who were exposed to perpetual pillage; the oppression was also extended to the troops, although they were all Ottoman. These soldiers, who were more inclined to commit acts of injustice than to put up with them, represented to the Porte, that the Moors and Arabs, irritated by repeated acts of tyranny, were ripe for a rebellion; that Spain, on her part, was preparing for an immediate invasion; and that the army, being incomplete and ill paid, had it neither in their inclination nor in their power to prevent these troublesome events. There was but one effectual method discovered to escape so many calamities; this was the founding of a particular government, which, under the protection of the seraglio, and paying a tribute to it, would itself provide for its maintenance and for its defence. Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, were put under a similar legislation, which is a species of aristocracy. The chief, who, under the title of dey, governs the republic, is elected by the soldiers, who are always Turkish, and constitute the only nobility of the country. These elections are seldom made without bloodshed; and it is no unusual thing for a man, who hath been elected in the midst of riot and

slaughter, to be afterwards assassinated by a restless faction, who design either to secure that distinction for themselves, or to sell it for their advancement. The empire of Morocco, though hereditary, is subjected to the same revolutions. We are going to see to what state of degradation this anarchy hath reduced a great part of the globe.

Present condition of Tripoli.

THE state of Tripoli is bounded by Egypt on one side, and by Tunis on the other, and extends two hundred and thirty leagues along the coast. Though the territory be not very fertile, yet the population might be easily increased ten fold, because the abundance of fish might supply the deficiency of crops, and these might also be improved by additional labour. The inland part of the country is nothing but a desert. We meet only, at a distance from each other, some Moorish and Arabian families, settled in the few places where they discovered land enough to furnish them with a moderate subsistence. At thirty days journey from the capital, is situated the miserable and tributary kingdom of Fez, the inhabitants of which are black. The little intercourse the countries maintain with each other, can only be kept up through dry and moveable sands, where water is seldom to be met with. The republic may enjoy a revenue of 2,000,000 livres [83,333l. 6s. 8d.] from the palm-trees, the wells that are in the country, the customs, and the mint.

The caravans of the Gadames, and of Tombuto, formerly carried a great deal of gold to Tripoli; but they have not lately been so rich or so constant. The caravan of Morocco still continues to call there in its way to and from Mecca, that place which is so much revered by the Musselmens; but, as the number of pilgrims hath evidently decreased, this passage is no longer so useful. For these reasons, the trade which is carried on by land is reduced to nothing, or to very little.

That which is carried on by sea is rather more considerable. The navigators of the Levant sometimes take in their cargoes from some of the indifferent harbours scattered along that immense coast, but most of them make their purchases and sales in the harbour of the capital, which is much better than the rest, and in which are collected all the foreign mer-

chandize, as well as those of the country. Although these operations be not very important, yet the connections of the republic with Europe are still more insignificant.

No people, except the Tuscans and Venetians, maintain any constant intercourse with Tripoli; and yet the mercantile articles of the former are not sold for more than 140,000 livres [5833l. 6s. 8d.] and those of the latter do not amount to 200,000 livres [8333l. 6s. 8d.] The former have remained subject to all the formalities of the customs; the second have freed themselves from them, by paying annually 55,500 livres [2312l. 10s.] to the treasury. The French have disdained to have any share in this bargain, though their sovereign hath not discontinued to send an agent to Tripoli.

Of all the Barbary states, Tripoli was for a long time the one which had the most numerous and the best armed privateers. They always sailed from the capital, which bears the same name as the kingdom.

This town, which hath long been suspected of being the ancient Orea, on account of its magnificent ruins, and of a beautiful aqueduct in great preservation, and which must at least have been a Greek or Roman colony, is situated on the borders of the sea, in a plain which only produces dates, and where neither springs nor rivers are to be found. It was one of the first posts occupied by the Arabians, who entered into Lybia through Egypt. The Spaniards took it in 1510, and eighteen years after, it was given by the emperor Charles V to the knights of Malta, in whose hands it remained only till the year 1551. It hath since been twice bombarded by the French; but the boldness of these pirates hath not been in the least restrained by these chastisements. The decline, and subsequent ruin of its maritime forces, have been entirely brought about by the civil commotions by which this unfortunate country hath been incessantly subverted.

TUNIS hath likewise neglected its military navy, since the time that the regency *Present situation of Tunis.* hath concluded treaties with the northern powers, and since Corsica hath fallen under the dominion of the French. It was found that the value of the prizes was hardly sufficient to reimburse the expences of fitting

out; and scarce any other vessels have been preserved, except such as were thought necessary to protect the coasts from the invasions of the Maltese.

The land forces have experienced no diminution. Five or six thousand Turks, or christian renegadoes, constitute the firmest support of the republic.

Their children, under the name of couloris, form a second troop; they are put upon pay as soon as they are born, and the first payment they receive is two aspres, or one sol [about a halfpenny.] This increases with their age, and with their rank, as far as twenty-nine aspres, or fourteen sols six deniers [rather more than 8d.]; and it is reduced to half that sum, when these soldiers are obliged by their infirmities, or by the wounds they have received, to retire.

The cavalry of the state consists of seven thousand Moors; their pay is very trifling, and, most frequently, given to them in provisions. Their most common occupation is to collect the duties imposed upon the Arabs.

These troops are all armed with firelocks without bayonets, and with two pistols at their girdle. Beside these, the Turks have a dagger, and the Moors a stiletto. In all of them, courage and impetuosity must both supply the deficiency of regular manœuvres and discipline.

No country in the northern part of Africa hath so considerable a revenue as Tunis. It consists of 18,000,000 of livres [750,000l.] This prosperity, which is entirely of a very modern date, hath been the consequence of a very fortunate revolution in the government. The dey, who in conjunction with his Turks, held the reins of government, hath been deprived of the greatest part of his authority, and hath been succeeded by a Moorish prince, who, under the title of bey, at present conducts the affairs of government, and is assisted by a more wise and more moderate council. Oppressions have, in some degree, been alleviated; the soil hath been less ill-cultivated, and the manufactures have acquired some extension. It was scarce possible that the connections with the inland parts of Africa could increase; they will always be confined to the barter of a small number of articles, for gold dust, conveyed across immense sands and deserts: but the maritime connections have been extended. The Levant hath received a greater quantity

of productions, and the trade with Europe hath likewise improved.

Though England, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Venice, Ragusa, and sometimes Tuscany, send consuls to Tunis, the trade carried on with those nations is very trifling; and, indeed, the English have no concern in it. They only keep an agent there for the greater security of their flag in the Mediterranean, and to procure an additional mart to the inhabitants of Minorca. The French carry off the greatest part of the trade from their united rivals; and yet they do not introduce goods annually into the dominions of the republic, to the amount of more than 2,000,000 of livres [83,333l. 6s. 8d.] To the profit which these people derive from their exports and imports, which become every day more considerable, must be added, the benefits which accrue to their navigators, by employing their vessels to carry the provisions of the republic to every sea-port of the Levant, and by bringing back what the republic receives from those places for its subsistence. Every one of the numerous vessels employed in this coasting trade pays thirty-one livres ten sols [1l. 6s. 3d.] for the privilege of anchoring, and an equal sum when they land their cargoes.

Every commodity that enters the state is not obliged to pay more than three per cent. if it comes directly from the country which furnishes it. But the productions of the north, or of other parts, which have been deposited at Leghorn, pay eight per cent. as well as those which come immediately from that celebrated port, and even eleven per cent. when directed to Jews. Formerly government had kept in their own hands the exclusive trade of the oils, which are required by some parts of Europe for their soap manufactories, and by Egypt, Algiers, and Tripoli, for other purposes; they have given up this monopoly; but this sacrifice hath been purchased by very considerable duties.

Though Tunis hath concentrated within its own walls a great part of the trade, the other harbours of the republic, scattered along a coast of fourscore leagues in extent, receive likewise some vessels.

The one which is the nearest to Tripoli, is called Sfax. It hath a clayish bottom, and hath so little water, that the smallest vessels are obliged to anchor at a distance, and to

fatigue their crews to excess, or to ruin themselves in expences for boats. The soil doth not produce any provisions proper for exportation, but some important manufactures have been formed in the town, which is mostly inhabited by Arabs.

The harbour of Sufa is defended by three castles, even the most modern of which is falling into ruin, though it be not yet finished. This harbour is very unsafe, the ships in it being constantly agitated by the east and by the north-west winds, which sometimes occasion the loss of those that have not had time to shelter themselves in the bay of Monoster. Notwithstanding this inconvenience, this city is the second in the republic; and this is owing to the abundance of its oil and of its wool.

Tunis is situated in the midst of infectious morasses, at the foot, or upon the declivity of a hill. Though the air be not pure, and though the waters be so bad, that the inhabitants are obliged to go two or three miles before they can find any that is fit to drink, yet one hundred and fifty thousand of the least barbarous people of Africa are collected within its walls. This town hath a communication with the sea, by means of a lake, which can admit none but very flat boats, that are called *sandals*. At the extremity of this lake is found a narrow canal leading to the Goulette, which must be considered as the harbour of the capital. This harbour is immense, safe, and most uncommonly even in its bottom and on its surface: it is only open to the north-east winds, and is closed by two chains of mountains, which are terminated on the north by Cape Bona and by Cape Zebib.

Biserta was very famous at the time that the republic kept up a great number of galleys; it was from that port they were fitted out, and they brought back to it the profits they reaped from their perpetual piracies. The canal which led from the harbour to the town hath been gradually filled up with mud, and it is at present accessible to no other vessels than sandals; even merchantmen can no longer enter it, and are obliged to cast anchor rather in a dangerous situation.

Port-Farine, situated on the ruins, or in the neighbourhood of the ancient Utica, was formerly one of the most extensive, safe, and commodious harbours of the Mediter-

anean, and would still be so under any other government except that of the Moors. It is defended by four forts, and closed by a narrow pass, which at this time is scarce accessible to the smallest vessels, and if it be still neglected, will be quite filled up in a short time, by the sands continually thrown in by the sea. It is, however, the arsenal, and the only asylum for the naval military forces, which are at present reduced to three half-galleys and five xebecs. The place where Carthage formerly stood, is a few miles distant from this town; there are no other remains of this renowned city, beside the ruins of a great aqueduct, and some cisterns in tolerable preservation. The traces even of its harbour are so much effaced, that the sea is at the distance of a league from it.

The island of Galite is situated almost at the mouth of the Zaine, which separates Tunis from Algiers. This island is covered with flocks, and more especially with mules, which are in great request throughout the whole of the Levant. Its numerous inhabitants are all weavers of wool, or employed in gathering sponge. Not far from this island is that of Tabarco, which the family of the Lomellini had been in possession of for two centuries, when they were deprived of it in 1741. The Genoese drew from this barren rock a great quantity of very fine coral.

To the west of Tunis is the republic of Algiers, the inland parts of which are bounded by the desert of Sahara, as are all the interior parts in Barbary; they are more extensive, more populous, and better cultivated than is generally supposed. There are not many towns in them, and most of these are built upon the coasts, the extent of which is one hundred and twenty leagues.

*Present state of
Algiers.*

The public revenue is not proportionate to the number of inhabitants and to the quantity of productions. The duties are commonly lost in the hands of dishonest persons who are appointed to collect them. The three beys, or governors of the east, of the south, and of the west, do not deliver into the treasury more than 1,250,000 livres [52,083l. 6s. 8d.] and give only 117,000 livres [4875l.] to the troops; whatever more is required for the expences of the state, is supplied by the customs, by the domain, by the

annua. levies in provisions, and in cattle, by the more precarious profit arising from prizes taken at sea, and from the sale of slaves.

The principal militia of the country consists entirely of Turks; their number ought to be twelve thousand, but they are never complete. The dey, his lieutenants, and the members of the divan, are chosen out of this powerful body.

The descendants of these privileged men are called *couloris*; their number is sixty thousand, they are all in the service of the regency, and paid in the same manner as at Tunis.

The cavalry, which consists of about twenty thousand men, is composed entirely of Moors; whether they make war against the Arabs, or are employed by government for the defence of the provinces, or in collecting the taxes, their pay is very trifling.

Beside this numerous army, which is always kept up, the government can dispose at pleasure of the Moors who dwell in the plains, or among the mountains, if they should be in want of them; they all of them join their standards without reluctance, and attack the enemy with great intrepidity.

The naval forces are not near so numerous as those of the land; at present they are reduced to seventeen vessels; one ship of fifty guns, two frigates of forty-two and thirty-four guns, five large barks, two xebecs, four half-galleys, and three galliots; several of these vessels, which are all destined for piracy, belong to the state, others to the officers of the regency, and some even to private individuals. Every proprietor bears the expence of his armament, and divides the profits with the treasury and with the crew. The dey commonly requires the prizes which consist of timber for ship-building, and of military stores. He ought to pay the value of them, but the indemnity is never proportioned to the sacrifice.

The navigators, to whom the ports of Algiers are opened, can land in seven or eight places.

The port of Callaa, at a small distance from the frontiers of Tunis, is tolerably good, but it cannot hold more than five or six ships. Those that are admitted into it are all French: some individuals of that nation have obtained, ever

since the year 1560, from the Moorish prince who governed the district at that time, the liberty of forming a settlement to carry on the coral fishery. They were driven away eight years after by the Turks, and re-established in 1597, but they were again expelled: they were recalled in 1637, and permitted to rebuild a small fortification formerly erected there, under the name of the bastion of France. Being soon disgusted with so inconvenient a situation, the persons concerned transferred their settlement to Chale, which the English had been compelled to abandon; they themselves were expelled soon after, and they were not allowed to return to their post, till after the bombardment of Algiers, executed in 1682 and 1684, by command of Lewis XIV.

In 1694, a more powerful association than any of the preceding obtained the exclusive trade upon a considerable extent of coast, by a treaty which hath often been renewed, and which will in all probability be maintained, because the conditions of it are favourable to the militia, to whom the tribute upon which it is founded belongs. Several companies have successively exercised this monopoly with more or less advantage. Since 1741, it is in the hands of a company, which hath formed at Marseilles a capital of 1,200,000 livres [50,000*l.*] divided into twelve hundred shares, three hundred of which belong to the chamber of commerce of this celebrated city.

The first transactions of the society were unfortunate. The depredations made by pirates and by the natives, by the competition of smugglers, and by a corrupt administration, reduced their capital, in 1766, to 570,000 livres [23,750*l.*]; since that period, their affairs have been so prosperous, that in the latter part of December 1773, they were in possession of 4,512,445 livres 3 sols 4 deniers [about 188,018*l.* 11*s.*] beside the doubtful debts, the value of their buildings, and some merchandize which remained unsold in the warehouses.

Their exports are trifling, and it is chiefly with money that they purchase coral, wax, wool, tallow, hides, and especially corn. In 1773, they brought into the kingdom eighty-four thousand three hundred and six loads of wheat, and sixteen thousand one hundred and seventy-three loads of barley, beans, and millet seed. One hundred, or one hundred and twenty vessels, the fitting out of which costs

about one hundred thousand crowns [12,500*l.*] are annually employed in this business.

Though the company hath agents at Bona, and at Callaa, all the transactions are carried on at the last place. They are even permitted to have a few batteries and some soldiers in this fortified factory, in order to secure themselves from the plunders of the pirates and from the insults of the neighbouring Moors.

The court of Versailles hath been often censured, for having shackled these connections in the bonds of a monopoly. It hath not been observed, that it was necessary to ensure the subsistence of Provence; and there was no other method of doing this, because the exportation of corn from the states of Barbary is seldom permitted.

Bona appears to have been the ancient Hippona. A few beautiful ruins are discovered amidst the boldness of the Moorish taste. It would be an easy matter to make a commodious harbour to the town, as it hath already an exceeding good road. This new asylum would be sufficiently protected by the works which have existed for a long while, under the name of the fort of Genoa.

Bugia is a tolerably large staple for oil, and for the wax, which is found in the neighbouring plains; and especially for iron, which is brought from more distant mountains, that abound in mines. Though its harbour be too much exposed to the north winds, the squadrons of the republic used to anchor in it, before they were destroyed there by the English in the last century.

The antiquities which are found in Tedelez prove that it was formerly a considerable place. The vestiges of a great pier are even discerned upon the shore, which probably advanced into the sea, and formed a port to the town. It is at present a very indifferent harbour, where ships which go to take in their lading are too often destroyed.

Algiers, the capital of the state, forms an amphitheatre, upon the declivity of a hill, which is crowned by the citadel. Its territory is well cultivated by slaves, and is covered with wheat, rice, hemp, fruits, vegetables, and even with vines, planted by the Moors who were expelled from Granada. The entering into, and the going out of, the port, are very difficult; it is exceedingly narrow, and doth not contain sufficient water to hold men of war: and in stormy

weather even the merchantmen are not safe ; they often run foul of each other, and are sometimes shattered, when the north or north-east winds blow with violence. The harbour forms a semicircle ; it hath a good bottom ; but as it is exposed to the same winds as the port, the ships are in equal danger in the stormy seasons.

Serceli is five or six leagues distant from Algiers. This town hath a creek, or small bay, where several vessels cast anchor. Its soil is very low, its shore beautiful, and it is the part of the coast the most favourable for a descent.

Arsew, the environs of which are delightful, must be the Arsenaria of the ancients. Some tolerably fine remains of several monuments are found in it. Its port is safe, commodious, and well frequented. A harbour might be formed in it, at a trifling expence, capable of receiving the largest ships. This is the Moorish town nearest to Oran, which the Spaniards took possession of in 1509 ; which was retaken from them in 1708 ; and which they retook in 1732, and have kept ever since.

The numbers of European ships which land annually at the states of Algiers, vary according to circumstances ; but they are never considerable ; the most plentiful harvest doth not attract above one hundred. A French vessel, whether great or small, laden or empty, pays for its anchorage 143 livres 8 sols [5l. 19s. 6d.] ; and this tax is still higher for other nations. They ought all, without distinction, to pay three per cent. for all the merchandize they bring in ; but this duty is reduced to two per cent. by the arrangements made with the farmers of the customs. The provisions that are exported from the country are subjected to no tax, because government are the only dealers in them.

Though the English, the Danes, the Dutch, the Swedes, and the Venetians, are perfectly free in the ports of Algiers, they nevertheless carry on no great trade there. Three fourths of the trade are fallen into the hands of the French ; and yet their annual sales do not amount to more than 200,000 livres [8,333l. 6s. 8d.] nor their purchases to above 600,000 livres [25,000.] Two thousand six hundred and fifty quintals of wool, five thousand of oil, sixteen thousand of wheat, and thirty thousand hides, are the amount of all their exports. The transactions of the African company are not included in these calculations.

Present state of Morocco. MOROCCO hath been as often and as dreadfully subverted as the rest of the northern coasts of Africa; but hath not submitted to the Turkish yoke. Even those provinces which had been dismembered from it, under the name of Fez, of Sus, and of Tafilet, have been successively united to the empire. One single despot governs this immense country, according to his caprices, which are almost always extravagant or sanguinary. The destructive authority which he hath been suffered to usurp, is perpetuated without any other regular troops, except a feeble guard of timid negroes. It is only with some of these slaves, whom he chooses occasionally to assemble under his banners, that he makes war. His maritime forces are scarce more formidable. They consist of three frigates, two half-galleys, three xebecs, and fifteen galliots. Piracy hath been hitherto their only occupation. It might be expected that these depredations would soon be put an end to, if it were reasonable to rely upon the faith of a tyrant, or to hope that his successors would at last adopt some more humane sentiments. The public revenue must be very trifling, in a region which is for ever ruined by vexations and massacres. The expences, however, are still less. Whatever can be spared is added to increase an immense treasure, anciently formed out of the spoils of Spain, and always augmented by a long series of sovereigns, more or less cruel, who looked upon money as the only good, and thought nothing of the happiness of their subjects.

This ardent thirst of wealth hath descended from the throne to individuals. A caravan sets out annually from the town of Morocco, which was the capital of the state, before Mequinez was preferred by the sovereigns. This caravan, which goes in search of gold from Upper Guinea, must have travelled over a space of five hundred leagues before its arrival in the kingdom, two hundred in the empire itself, two hundred in the desert of Sahara, and one hundred after having quitted it. In the midst of the desert, surrounded with barren and accumulated sands, where it is not possible to travel but in the night, where the march must necessarily be slow, where one must be guided by a compass, and by observing the stars, in the same manner as on the ocean; in this desert nature hath placed a less savage district, abounding in springs and in salt mines. The camels are

laden with this necessary fossil, and it is carried to Tombuto, where gold is received in exchange.

This precious metal, when arrived at Morocco, is very seldom circulated there. It is buried, as in all governments where the fortunes of individuals are not secure. A similar destiny attends the money which is introduced by the Europeans in the empire, in the nine harbours which are always open to them.

Tetuan is the nearest port to the state of Algiers. It is safe, unless the easterly winds blow with violence, which seldom happens. The river of Bourfega, which empties itself into it, serves for an asylum to some pirates during the winter. The garrison of Gibraltar formerly sent to purchase there the cattle, fruit, and vegetables, necessary for its consumption; but this connection hath ceased, since the sovereign of the country hath required that the English consul should reside at Tangier.

This town, conquered by Portugal in 1471, was given to the English in 1662. They forsook it, after keeping it two and-twenty years. When they retired, they blew up a pier, which they had constructed for the security of the largest ships. The ruins of this beautiful work have rendered the approach of the bay very difficult. Accordingly, it would be of no importance, if the mouth of the river, which is discovered at the end, did not afford a shelter to most of the galliots of the empire. Tangier hath succeeded Tetuan in supplying Gibraltar with provisions. The communication between these two Moorish towns is interrupted by the fortress of Ceuta, which is parted from Spain, to which it belongs, only by a strait of five leagues.

Arrach is the natural vent for the productions of Asgar, one of the largest and the most fertile provinces of the empire. This advantage, a fortunate position, and the goodness of its port, must sooner or later impart to it some degree of activity. At present it is inhabited only by soldiers. Since the expedition which the French attempted against it in 1765, the fortifications raised by the Spaniards, when they were masters of the place, have been restored.

Sallee was, not long ago, almost an independent republic, under a chief elected by itself. Its situation, in the midst of the country subject to Morocco, enabled it to collect a great many provisions. Its inhabitants were at once both

merchants and pirates. They have almost ceased to exercise either of these professions, after having been subdued, and spoiled of their riches by the present monarch, at the time that his father was upon the throne. A sand-bank, which seems to be perpetually increasing, prevents all ships from entering the river, except those which do not carry more than six or seven feet of water; but the harbour is safe from the end of April till the end of September.

Muley Muhamet was desirous of building a commercial town in the peninsula of Fedale, and most of the buildings were begun. A harbour, which is safe in all seasons, though the sea be constantly agitated, had suggested this idea to him. He hath given it up, since he hath been made to understand that the expence would be thrown away upon a coast which was accessible almost in all parts.

In 1769, the Portuguese forsook Mazagan, after having destroyed the works. Since this period, the place is almost deserted. Its harbour is convenient in summer for small vessels; but even in that season the men of war are obliged to anchor at a distance.

Saffi hath a large harbour, which is very safe part of the year, but too much exposed in winter to the violence of the south and south-east winds. Its situation, in the midst of a fertile, rich, and populous country, had rendered this great town almost the general market of the productions of the empire. It hath been lately stripped of this advantage by Mogador, which is built on the most western part of Africa.

The port of this new staple is only a canal formed by an island, at the distance of five hundred toises from the land. One may sail in and out of it with every wind; but it hath not sufficient depth to harbour large ships, and the anchorage is not safe in bad weather. No man of war can anchor on the coast, on account of the great rapidity of the currents. Though the territory surrounding this place be not very fit for cultivation, the caprice of the despot, who still governs the country, hath rendered it the most important mart of his dominions, more considerable even than all the others collectively.

Santa Cruz, situated in the kingdom of Sus, in the thirtieth degree of latitude, is the last maritime place of the empire. Its harbour is convenient, and very safe even for

ships of the line, but during summer only. It was formerly a tolerably great market, where the navigators found collected together all the productions of an extensive and well cultivated country, and where all the gold which Tarodant drew from Tombuto was brought. The town was taken out of the hands of the Portuguese, and returned under the dominion of the Moors, without entirely losing its importance. An earthquake, which destroyed part of it in 1731, was more fatal than this revolution. It might perhaps have recovered from this calamity, had not Muley Muhamet, in a fit of passion, the cause of which was never known, driven the inhabitants out of it some years after, and substituted to them a colony of negroes.

Morocco receives but few European vessels. Its ports are shut against several nations, and England, Holland, and Tuscany, who have formed treaties with that power, reap no great advantage from them. In order to give some spirit to this trade, which was perhaps too much neglected, a capital of 1,323,958 livres 6 sols 6 deniers [about 55,164l. 18s. 8d.] was formed at Copenhagen in 1755, which was divided into five hundred shares, of 2647 livres 18 sols 4 deniers each [about 110l. 6s. 8d.] This association was to last forty years; but, for what reason is not known, it hath not continued half the time. Though the connections of France with that empire have not subsisted beyond the year 1767, the transactions of this crown are of much more importance, and yet its annual sales do not exceed 400,000 livres [16,666l. 13s. 4d.] nor its purchases 1,200,000 livres [50,000l.]

Every thing that enters, or comes out of, the states of Morocco, pays ten per cent. Each vessel is also obliged to deliver five hundred pounds of gunpowder, and ten bullets from ten to twelve inches in diameter, or 577 livres 10 sols [24l. 1s. 3d.] in specie. The Spanish coin is most commonly used; but all the others are admitted according to their weight and their denomination.

THE picture that hath just been traced of the countries of Barbary, must have appeared very horrid. The state of desolation in which we have seen them plunged,

Origin of the piracies committed upon the eastern coasts of Africa.

Means of putting a stop to them. hath been the unavoidable consequence of the propensity of these people to piracy. This taste, which is very ancient in these regions, increased considerably after they had shaken off a foreign yoke. It became a passion, upon occasion of an event which greatly increased their maritime forces.

Spain, which, for several centuries, had been subject to the disciples of the koran, had, at last, broken its chains, and subdued the mohammedans in its turn. It was desirous of compelling them to turn christians; and its zeal was irritated by unfurmoutable resistance. Its blindness went so far as to depopulate the state, in order to purge it of suspicious subjects, and such as were of an inimical religion. Most of these exiles sought a refuge among the people of Barbary. Their new country was too ignorant of trade and industry, to enable them to put forth their talents, and to avail themselves of their riches. The spirit of revenge made them pirates. At first they contented themselves with ravaging the vast and fertile plains of their oppressors. They surprised, in their beds, the lazy inhabitants of the rich countries of Valencia, Grenada, and Andalusia, and reduced them to slavery. But, at length, disdaining the spoils they acquired upon a soil which they had formerly cultivated with their own hands, they constructed large vessels, insulted the flag of the other nations, and reduced the greatest powers of Europe to the shameful necessity of sending them annual presents, which, under whatever denomination we may disguise them, are, in fact, a tribute. These pirates have been sometimes punished, sometimes humbled; but their depredations have never been totally suppressed, although this might be done with the greatest ease.

The Arabs, wandering in the deserts; the ancient inhabitants of the country, who cultivate the fields; the Moors come out of Spain, most of whom are settled upon the coasts; the Jews, who are despised, oppressed, and outraged: all the people, in a word, of that continent, detest the yoke which oppresses them, and would not make the least exertion to continue under it.

No foreign succour would retard for a moment the fall of this authority. The only power that might be suspected of wishing its preservation, the sultan of Constantinople, is

not so highly gratified with the vain title of protector, which it confers on him, nor so jealous of that of the chief of the religion which is ascribed to him, to interest himself warmly in its preservation. All endeavours to excite the Turks to interfere, by submissions, which particular circumstances might probably extort from these plunderers, would certainly be ineffectual. Their intreaties would not impart strength. For these two centuries past, the Porte has no navy, and its military power is continually decaying.

But to what people is reserved the glory of breaking those fetters which Africa is thus insensibly preparing for us, and of removing those terrors, which are so formidable to our navigators? No nation can attempt it alone; and, perhaps, if it did, the jealousy of the rest would throw secret obstacles in its way. This must, therefore, be the work of a general combination. All the maritime powers must concur in the execution of a design, in which all are equally interested. These states, which every thing invites to mutual alliance, to mutual good-will, to mutual defence, ought to be weary of the calamities which they reciprocally bring upon each other. After having so frequently united for their mutual destruction, let them at length take up arms for their preservation. War, for once at least, will then become useful and just.

One may venture to assert, that such a war would be of no long continuance, if it were conducted with skill and unanimity. Each member of the confederacy, attacking at the same time the enemy it had to reduce, would experience but a weak resistance, or, perhaps, none. Perhaps, this noblest and greatest of enterprises would cost Europe less blood and treasure, than the most trivial of those quarrels with which it is continually agitated.

No man would do the politicians who should form this plan the injustice to suppose, that they would confine their ambition to the filling up of roads, the demolishing of forts, and the ravaging of coasts. Such narrow notions would be inconsistent with the present improvements of reason. The countries subdued would remain to the conquerors, and each of the allies would acquire possessions proportionate to the assistance they had given to the common cause. These conquests would become so much the more secure, as the happiness of the vanquished would be the consequence of

them. This race of pirates, these sea-monsters, would be changed into men by salutary laws and examples of humanity. The progress they would gradually make, by the knowledge we should impart to them, would, in time, dispel that fanaticism which ignorance and misery have kept up in their minds. They would ever recollect, with gratitude, the memorable era which had brought us to their shores.

We should no longer see them leave a country uncultivated, which was formerly so fertile. Corn and various fruits would soon cover this immense tract of land. These productions would be bartered for the works of our industry and of our manufactures. European traders, settled in Africa, would become the factors of this trade, which would prove of mutual advantage to both countries. A communication so natural, between opposite coasts, and between people who have a necessary intercourse with each other, would, as it were, extend the boundaries of the world. This new kind of conquest which presents itself to us, would amply compensate for those which, during so many centuries, have contributed to the distress of mankind.

The jealousy of the great maritime powers, who have obstinately rejected all expedients to re-establish tranquillity on our seas, hath been the chief impediment to so important a revolution. The hope of checking the industry of every weak state, hath accustomed them to wish that these piracies of Barbary should continue, and hath even induced them to encourage these plunderers. This is an enormity, the ignominy of which they would never have incurred, if their understanding had equalled their mercenary views. All nations would certainly profit from this happy change; but the greatest advantages would infallibly redound to the maritime states, in proportion to their power. Their situation, the safety of their navigation, the greatness of their capital, and various other means, would secure them this superiority. They are constantly complaining of the shackles which national envy, the folly of restraints and prohibitions, and the confined idea of exclusive traffic, have imposed upon their activity. The people gradually become as much strangers to one another, as they were in the barbarous ages. The void, which this want of communication necessarily occasions would be filled up, if Africa were brought to have wants

and resources to satisfy them. The spirit of commerce would have a new career opened to its exertion.

Nevertheless, if the reduction and subjection of Barbary would not become a source of happiness for them as well as for ourselves; if we are resolved not to treat them as brethren; if we wish not to consider them as our friends; if we must keep up and perpetuate slavery and poverty among them; if fanaticism can still renew those detestable crusades, which philosophy, too late, hath consigned to the indignation of all ages; if Africa must at length become the scene of our cruelties, as Asia and America have been, and still are; may the project which humanity hath now dictated to us, for the good of our fellow-creatures, be buried in perpetual oblivion! Let us remain in our ports. It is indifferent, whether they be christians or musselmen who suffer. Man is the only object worthy to interest man.

Men! you are all brethren. How long will you defer to acknowledge each other? How long will it be before you perceive that Nature, your common mother, offers nourishment equally to all her children? Why must you destroy each other; and why must the hand that feeds you be continually stained with your blood? The acts that would excite your abhorrence in animals, you have been committing almost ever since you exist. Are you apprehensive of becoming too numerous? And do you not think that you will be exterminated fast enough by pestilential diseases, by the inclemency of the elements, by your labours, by your passions, by your vices, by your prejudices, by the weakness of your organs, and by the natural shortness of your life? The wisdom of the Being to whom you owe your existence hath prescribed limits to your population, and to that of all living creatures, which will never be broken through. Have you not, in your wants, which are incessantly renewed, a sufficient number of enemies conspiring against you, without entering into a league with them? Man boasts of his superior excellence to all natural beings; and yet with a spirit of ferociousness, which is not observed even in the race of tigers, man is the most terrible scourge of man. If his wishes were to be accomplished, there would soon remain no more than one single being of the same species upon the whole face of the globe.

Colour of the inhabitants of the western coast of Africa, known by the name of Guinea.

Inquiry into the cause of this phenomenon.

THIS being so cruel and so compassionate, so odious and so interesting, unhappy in the northern part of Africa, experiences a destiny infinitely more dreadful in the western part of this vast region.

Upon this coast, which extends from the strait of Gibraltar to the Cape of Good Hope, the inhabitants have all, beyond the Niger, an oblong head; the nose large, flattened, and spread out; thick lips; and curled hair, like the wool of our sheep. They are born white; and the only brown colour they at first exhibit, is round the nails and the eyes, with a small spot formed at the extremity of the genitals. Towards the eighth day after their birth the children begin to change colour, their skin darkens, and at length grows black, but of a dirty fallow, and almost livid black; which, in process of time, becomes glossy and shining.

The flesh however, the bones, the viscera, and all the internal parts, are of the same colour in negroes as in white people. The lymph is equally white and limpid; and the milk of the nurses is everywhere the same.

The most palpable difference between them is, that the negroes have the skin much hotter, and, as it were, oily, the blood of a blackish hue, the bile very deep coloured, the pulse quicker, a sweat which yields a strong and disagreeable smell, and a perspiration which often blackens the substance it comes in contact with. One of the inconveniencies of this black colour, the image of night, which confounds all objects, is, that it hath, in some measure, obliged these people to scar their face and breast, and to stain their skin with various colours, in order that they may know each other at a distance. There are some tribes in which this practice is universal; among others, it appears to be a distinction reserved to superior rank. But as we see this custom established among the people of Tartary, of Canada, and of other savage nations, it may be doubted, whether it be not rather the effect of their wandering way of life, than of their complexion.

This colour proceeds from a mucous substance, which forms a kind of network between the epidermis and the skin. This substance, which is white in Europeans, brown

in people of an olive complexion, and sprinkled over with reddish spots among light-haired or carotty people, is blackish among the negroes.

✓ The desire of discovering the causes of this colour, hath given rise to a variety of systems.

Theology, which hath taken possession of the human mind by opinion; which hath availed itself of the first fears of infancy, to inspire reason with eternal apprehensions; which hath altered every thing, geography, astronomy, philosophy, and history; which hath introduced the marvellous and the mysterious in every thing, in order to arrogate to itself the right of explaining every thing: theology, after having made a race of men guilty and unfortunate from the fault of Adam, hath made a race of black men, in order to punish the fratricide of his son. The negroes are the descendants of Cain. If their father was an assassin, it must be allowed, that his posterity have made a severe atonement for his crime; and that the descendants of the pacific Abel have thoroughly avenged the innocent blood of their father.

Reason hath attempted to explain the colour of the negroes, from consequences deduced from the phenomena of chemistry. According to some naturalists, it is a vitriolic fluid contained in the lymph of the negroes, and being too gross to pass through the pores of the skin, it ferments and unites with the mucous body, which it colours. It is then urged, why is the hair curled, and why are the eyes and teeth of negroes so white? for the authors of this system do not consider, that a vitriolic salt of such power and activity would at length destroy all organization. This, however, is as perfect in negroes as in the whitest of the human race.

Anatomy hath thought to have discovered the origin of the blackness of negroes in the principles of generation. Nothing more, it should seem, would be necessary to prove, that negroes are a particular species of men. For if any thing discriminates the species, or the classes in each species, it is certainly the difference of the semen. But upon considering the matter more attentively, this hath been found to be a mistake, so that this explanation of the colour of negroes hath been given up. Neither have the consequences, pretended to be deduced from the difference between their

figure and that of other people, appeared more convincing. Some of these forms are owing to the climate, most of them to ancient customs. It hath been conceived, that these barbarians might possibly have formed some extravagant ideas of beauty, according to which they had endeavoured to form their children; that this habit, in process of time, had been turned into nature, so that it was very seldom necessary to have recourse to art, in order to obtain these singular forms.

There are other causes of the colour of negroes, more satisfactory than these: the seat of it, as we have observed, is in the *rete mucosum*, under the epidermis, or cuticle. The substance of this net-work, which is mucous in the first instance, is afterwards changed into a web of vessels, the diameter of which is considerable enough to admit, either a portion of the colouring part of the blood, or of the bile, which is said to have a peculiar tendency towards the skin. From hence proceeds among white people, in whom this *rete mucosum* is more lax, the more vivid complexion of the cheeks. From hence also, that yellow or copper colour, which distinguishes whole nations; while under another climate, it is confined to one person, and produced by disease. The existence of one or of the other of these fluids, is sufficient to colour the negroes, especially if we add, that the epidermis, and the *rete mucosum*, is thicker in them; that the blood is blackish, and the bile deeper coloured, and that their sweat, which is more plentiful and less fluid, must necessarily thicken under the epidermis, and increase the darkness of the colour.

This system is also supported by natural philosophy, which observes, that the parts of the body exposed to the sun are most deeply coloured, and that travellers, and people who dwell in the country, and who lead a wandering life; all those, in a word, who live continually in the open air, and under a more burning sky, have darker complexions. Philosophy thinks, from these observations, that the primitive cause of the colour of the negroes may be attributed to the climate and to the ardour of the sun. There are no negroes, it is said, except in hot climates; their colour becomes darker in proportion as they approach the equator. It grows lighter at the extremities of the torrid zone. All the human species, in general, whitens in the snow, and is

tanned in the sun. We perceive the different shades from white to black, and those from black to white, marked, as it were, by the parallel degrees which cut the earth in the direction from the equator to the poles. If the zones, contrived by the inventors of the sphere, were represented by real bands, we should see the black ebony colour insensibly changing to the right and left as far as the tropics, and from thence the brown colour would be seen to grow paler and lighter as far as the polar circles, by shades of white continually increasing in clearness.

As the shades of black are, however, deeper upon the western coasts of Africa, than in other regions perhaps as much heated, the ardour of the sun must certainly be combined with other causes, which have an equal influence upon organization. Such of the Europeans as have made the longest residence in those countries, attribute this greater degree of blackness to the nitrous, sulphureous, or metallic particles, that are continually exhaling from the surface or from the bowels of the earth, to the custom of going naked, to the proximity of burning sands, and to other particulars which do not occur elsewhere in the same degree.

The circumstance that seems to confirm the opinion, that the colour of the negroes is the effect of the climate, of the air, of the water, and of the food of Guinea, is, that this colour changes when the inhabitants are removed into other countries. The children they procreate in America are not so black as their parents were. After each generation, the difference becomes more palpable. It is possible, that after a numerous succession of generations, the men come from Africa would not be distinguished from those of the country into which they may have been transplanted.

Although the opinion, which ascribes to the climate the first cause of the colour of the inhabitants of Guinea, be almost generally adopted, all the objections that may be urged against this system have not yet been answered. This is one proof, added to a multitude of others, of the uncertainty of our knowledge.

And, indeed, how is it possible that our knowledge should not be uncertain and circumscribed? Our organs are so feeble, and our means so insufficient, our studies so much interrupted, our life so much agitated, and the object of our inquiries is of so immense an extent! Let naturalists,

philosophers, chemists, and accurate observers of nature in all her works, persevere in their labours incessantly ; and, after ages of united and continual efforts, the secrets of Nature which they will have discovered, when compared to her immense treasures, will be no more than as a drop of water to the vast ocean. The rich man sleeps, and the learned man is watchful, but he is poor. His discoveries are matters of too little concern to government, to encourage him to solicit assistance or to hope for reward. More than one Aristotle would be found among us, but where is the monarch who would say to him, my power is at thy disposal, make a free use of my riches, and persevere in thy labours ? Tell us, thou celebrated Buffon, tell us to what height of perfection thou wouldst have carried thine immortal work, hadst thou lived under an Alexander ?

The contemplative man is sedentary, and the traveller is either ignorant or deceitful. The man on whom genius hath been bestowed, despises minute details and experiments ; and the man who makes experiments is almost always destitute of genius. Among the multitude of agents which nature employs, we are only acquainted with some, and even these we have but an imperfect knowledge of. Who shall determine, whether the others are not of such a nature as to elude for ever our senses, as not to be wrought upon by our instruments, and not to be submitted to our observations and experiments ? The nature of those two principles that compose the universe, spirit and matter, will be ever a mystery.

Among the natural qualities of bodies, there is not a single one, upon which multitudes of experiments are not yet remaining to be tried ; and it is even a matter of doubt, whether all these experiments are feasible. How long shall we be reduced to the necessity of forming conjectures, which are one day brought forth, and the next refuted ? Who shall restrain that almost invincible propensity to analogy, a mode of judging so seducing, so convenient, and so fallacious ? No sooner have we collected a few facts, than we hasten to build up a system, which leads the multitude, and suspends our researches after truth. The time employed in forming an hypothesis, and the time employed in refuting it, are both equally lost. The sciences of calculation, that are so satisfactory to self-love, which delights in overcoming

difficulties, and to the accurate man, who is fond of exact inferences, will continue, but with little advantage, in the common usages of life. Religion, which looks with disdain upon the labours of a being in a chrysalis, and which is secretly alarmed at the progress of reason, will multiply idle persons, and retard the labours of the industrious by fear or by scruples. In proportion as a science advances, the improvement of it becomes more difficult, the greater number become disgusted, and the science is no longer cultivated, unless by a few persevering men, who still attend to it, either from habit, or from the expectation, well or ill founded, of acquiring fame; till at length ridicule interferes, and the man is pointed at as a fool or a madman, who flatters himself that he shall overcome a difficulty which some celebrated persons may not have been able to solve. Thus it is, that his contemporaries endeavour to conceal their apprehension of his being really successful.

In all ages, and among all nations, we have seen some studies prevailing, which were afterwards neglected, and succeeded by others in a kind of regular order. This fickleness and disgust are not the defects of one man alone; they are the vice of the most numerous and most enlightened societies. It should seem as if the arts and sciences had their periods of fashion.

We have begun by having erudite men. After these came the poets and orators. To the poets and orators succeeded metaphysicians, who gave way to geometricians, and these again to natural philosophers, which in their turn have been replaced by naturalists and chemists. The turn for natural history seems to be upon the decline. We are now entirely absorbed in questions of government, of legislation, of morality, of politics, and of commerce. If I might be allowed to hazard a prophecy, I should predict, that the minds of men will incessantly be turned towards history, an immense career, in which philosophy hath not yet made any advances.

For, in fact, if from that infinite multitude of volumes, we were to tear out the pages bestowed upon great assassins, who are called conquerors, or reduce the accounts of them to a few pages, which even they scarce deserve, what would there be remaining? Who is it that hath spoken to us of

the climate, of the soil, of productions, of quadrupeds, of birds, of fish, of plants, of fruits, of minerals, of manners, of customs, of superstitions, of prejudices, of sciences, of arts, of commerce, of government, and of laws? What do we know of a multitude of ancient nations, that can be of the least use to modern ones? Both their wisdom and their folly are equally lost to us. Their annals never give us any information upon those points which it most concerns us to know; upon the true glory of a sovereign, upon the basis of the strength of nations, upon the felicity of the people, upon the duration of empires. Let those beautiful addresses of a general to his soldiers upon the point of action, serve as models of eloquence to the rhetorician; there can be no objection to this; but were I to get them by heart, I should neither become more equitable, nor more firm, nor more informed, nor a better man. The time draws near, when reason, justice, and truth, shall snatch out of the hands of ignorance and flattery, the pen which they have holden but for too long a time. Tremble, you who delude men with falsehoods, or who make them groan under the yoke of oppression. Sentence is going to be passed upon you.

There are but two seasons known in Guinea. The most wholesome, and the most agreeable one, begins in April and ends in October. Then it never rains; but thick vapours, which cover the horizon, intercept the rays of the sun, and moderate the ardour of them; and every night there are dews that fall in sufficient quantities to keep up the vegetation of plants. During the rest of the year the heats are excessive, and would perhaps be insupportable, were it not for the rains, which succeed each other with great rapidity. Unfortunately, nature hath seldom disposed the territory so as to favour the running off of these waters when too plentiful; and art hath never interfered to assist nature. Hence the origin of so many morasses in this part of the globe. They are most commonly fatal to strangers, whom their avidity leads into the vicinity of them. The natives of the country, by kindling fires every night near their dwellings, purify the corrupt air, to which they are moreover accustomed from their infancy. The little varieties which the north and south of the line may exhibit, do not invalidate the accuracy of these observations.

FROM the frontiers of the empire of Morocco, as far as Senegal, the land is entirely barren. A long band of the deserts of Sahara, which extends from the Atlantic ocean as far as Egypt, to the south of all the states of Barbary, occupies this immense space. Some Moorish families live in the midst of these burning sands, in a few places where springs, which are very scarce, have been found, and where it hath been possible to plant palm-trees and gather dates. Their chief employment consists in collecting the gums which have attracted the attention of all Europe upon that country. These Moors carry to Upper Guinea, and principally to Bambouk, a great quantity of salt, in exchange for which they receive gold, and sometimes slaves.

The banks of the Niger, Gambia, and Sierra Leone, and those of some less considerable rivers, which flow in that long space that intervenes between these principal rivers, would prove extremely fertile if they were cultivated. The care of flocks constitutes almost the sole employment of the inhabitants. They are fond of mare's milk, which is their principal nourishment; and travel but little, because they have no wants to induce them to leave their country.

The inhabitants of Cape Monte, environed on every side by sands, form a nation entirely separated from the rest of Africa. In the rice of their marshes consists all their nourishment and their sole riches. Of this they sell a small quantity to the Europeans, for which they receive in exchange brandy and hardware.

From the Cape of Palmas to the river Volta, the inhabitants are traders and husbandmen. They are husbandmen, because their land, though stony, abundantly requites the necessary labour and expence of clearing it. They are traders, because they have behind them nations which furnish them with gold, copper, ivory, and slaves; and because nothing obstructs a continued communication between the people of the inland country and those of the coast. It is the sole country in Africa, where, throughout a long space, there are no deserts or deep rivers to obstruct the traveller, and where water and the means of subsistence may be found.

Between the river of Volta and that of Calbary, the coast is flat, fertile, populous and cultivated. The country which extends from Calbary to Gabon is very different. Almost totally covered with thick forests, producing little fruit and no corn, it may be said to be rather inhabited by wild beasts than by men. Though the rains be there very frequent and copious, as they must be under the equator, the land is so sandy, that immediately after the showers are fallen, there remains not the least appearance of moisture.

To the south of the line, and as far as Zara, the coast presents an agreeable prospect. Low at its beginning, it gradually rises, and exhibits a scene of cultivated fields, intermixed with woods always verdant, and of meadows covered with palm-trees.

From Zara to Coanza, and still further, the coast is in general high and craggy. In the interior parts of this country is an elevated plain, the soil of which is composed of a large, thick, and fertile sand.

Beyond Coanza and the Portuguese settlements, a barren region intervenes, of above two hundred leagues in extent, which is terminated by the country of the Hottentots. In this long space there are no inhabitants known except the Cimbebes, with whom no intercourse is kept up.

The varieties observable on the shores of the west of Africa do not prevent them from enjoying a very extraordinary, and perhaps a singular advantage. On this immense coast, those tremendous rocks are nowhere seen which are so alarming to the navigator. The sea is universally calm, and the anchorage secure. Were it not for these advantages, it would be difficult to remain there, because there are very few harbours, and because the ships are obliged to anchor out at sea on account of the sand banks, which are almost contiguous to each other.

The winds and currents, during six months of the year, from April to November, have nearly the same direction. To the south of the line, the south-east wind predominates, and the direction of the currents is towards the north; and to the north of the line the east wind prevails, and the direction of the currents is towards the north-east. During the six other months, storms, by intervals, change the direction of the wind, but it no longer blows with the same violence: the spring of the air seems to be relaxed. The cause

of this variation appears to influence the direction of the currents: to the north of the line they tend to the south-west, beyond the line to the south.

THE revolutions which must have happened in the north of Africa, as well as in the other parts of the globe, are entirely unknown, and it was impossible it should be otherwise, in a region where the art of writing hath never penetrated. No tradition hath even been preserved, which might serve as a basis to conjectures well or ill founded. When the people of these regions are asked, why they have suffered the remembrance of their father's actions to be buried in oblivion? they answer, that it is of little consequence to be informed in what manner the dead have lived; that the material thing is, that the living should be virtuous. So indifferent are they about the past time, that they neglect even to keep an account of their annual revolutions. This would be, say they, to load one's memory with a useless calculation, since it would not preserve us from death, and could not inform us how long we have to live. In speaking, therefore, of this part of the world, we are obliged to count from the epochas of the arrival of the Europeans upon these shores. We must even confine ourselves to the coasts, since no traveller of any credit hath ever penetrated into the inland parts of the country; and since our navigators have scarce extended their inquiries beyond the harbours where they took in their cargoes.

Idea of the several governments established in Guinea.

All their accounts affirm, that the known parts of this region are subject to an arbitrary government. Whether the despotic sovereign ascend the throne by right of birth or by election, the people have no other law but his will.

But what will seem extraordinary to the inhabitants of Europe, where the great number of hereditary monarchies obstructs the tranquillity of elective governments and the prosperity of all free states, is, that in Africa, the countries which are the least liable to revolutions are those which have preserved the right of electing their chiefs. This is usually an old man, whose wisdom is generally known. The manner in which this choice is made is very simple; but it is only suited to very small states. In three days time, the people, by mutual consent, meet at the house of

that citizen who appears to them the most proper person to be their sovereign. If the suffrages be divided, he who hath obtained the greatest number of them, names on the fourth day one of those who have had fewer voices than himself. Every freeman hath a right to vote. There are even some tribes where the women enjoy this privilege.

Such is, excepting the hereditary kingdoms of Benin and Juda, the manner in which that little group of states, that are to the north of the line, is formed. "To the south we meet with Mayumba and Cilingo, where chiefs are elected from among the ministers of religion; and with the empires of Loango and Congo, where the crown is perpetual in the male line, by the female side; that is, the eldest son of the king's eldest sister inherits the throne when it becomes vacant. These people believe that a child is much more certainly the son of his mother than of the man whom she marries: they trust rather to the time of delivery, which they see, than to that of conception, of which they are not witnesses.

These nations live in a total ignorance of that art so revered among us, under the name of politics. They do not, however, neglect to observe some of its formalities. The custom of sending embassies is familiar to them, whether to solicit aid against a powerful enemy, or to request a mediator in their differences, or to congratulate others upon their successes, upon the birth of a child, or upon the falling of a shower after a great drought. The envoy must never stay longer than a day at the place of his mission; nor travel during the night in the states of a foreign prince. He is preceded by a drum, which announces from afar his dignity, and he is accompanied by five or six friends. In those places where he stops to refresh himself, he is received with respect; but he cannot depart before the sun rises, and without the ceremony of his host assembling some persons, to witness that no accident hath happened to him. In other respects, these people are strangers to any negotiations that are in the least complicated. They never enter into any stipulations for the past nor for the future, but confine themselves wholly to the present. Hence we may conclude, that these nations cannot have any regular or settled connections with the other parts of the globe.

THEIR system of war is as little complicated as that of their politics. None of these governments retain troops in pay. Every freeman is by condition a soldier.

Manner of making war in Guinea.

All take up arms to guard their frontiers, or to make excursions in quest of booty. The officers are chosen by the soldiers, and the choice is confirmed by the prince. The army marches, and most frequently the hostilities, which are begun in the morning, are terminated in the evening. At least, the incursion never continues for any length of time; for as they have no magazines, the want of subsistence obliges them to retire. It would prove a great misfortune to these people if they were taught the art of keeping the field for a fortnight together.

The desire of extending their territories is not the cause of the disturbances which frequently throw these countries into confusion. An insult committed in a ceremony, a clandestine or violent robbery, the rape of a daughter, these are the ordinary occasions of a war. The day after the battle, each side redeems their respective prisoners. They are exchanged for merchandize or for slaves. No portion of the territory is ever ceded, the whole belongs to the community, whose chief fixes the extent which every person is to cultivate, in order to reap the fruits of it.

This manner of terminating differences is not merely that of little states, whose chiefs are too wise to aspire after enlarging their dominions, and too much advanced in years not to be fond of peace. Great empires are obliged to conform to these principles with neighbours much weaker than themselves. The sovereign hath never any standing army; and though he disposes at pleasure of the lives of the governors of the provinces, he prescribes them no rules of administration. These are petty princes, who, for fear of being suspected of ambition and punished with death, live in concord with the elective colonies which surround them. Unanimity between the more considerable powers and the smaller states, is preserved as much by the great authority the prince hath over his subjects, as by the impossibility there is of his exerting it at pleasure. He can only strike a single blow, or cause a single head to be cut off. He may, indeed, command that his lieutenant should be assassinated, and the whole province will obey his orders;

but were he to command all the inhabitants of a province to be put to death, he would find no one ready to execute his orders; nor would he be able to excite any other province to take up arms against that which disobeyed him. His power against individuals is unlimited; but he can do very little against the collective body.

Another reason which prevents the small states from being enslaved by the great ones, is, that these people annex no idea to the glory of conquests. The only person who appears to have been animated with it, was a slave broker, who from his infancy had frequented the European vessels, and who in his riper years had made a voyage to Portugal. Every thing he saw and heard fired his imagination, and taught him that a great name was frequently acquired by being the cause of great calamities. At his return into his country, he felt himself greatly humiliated at being obliged to obey people less enlightened than himself. His intrigues raised him to the dignity of chief of the Acanis, and he prevailed on them to take up arms against their neighbours. Nothing could oppose his valour, and his dominion extended over more than an hundred leagues of coast, of which Anamabou was the centre. At his death no one dared to succeed him: and all the supports of his authority failing at once, every thing returned to its former situation.

Modes of worship established in Guinea. THE christian and mohammedan religions seem to have taken possession of the two extremities of that part of the west of Africa which is frequented by the Europeans. The musselmens of Barbary have carried their religious system to the people of the Cape de Verd islands, who have extended it still further. In proportion as these religious opinions have been distant from their source, they have undergone so great an alteration, that each kingdom, each village, each family, have maintained a different system. Excepting circumcision, which is universal, it would scarcely be imagined that these people professed the same worship. This religion does not penetrate beyond the cape of Monte, the inhabitants of which have no communication with their neighbours.

What the Arabs had done to the north of the line for the koran, the Portuguese afterwards did to the south for

the gospel. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, they established it from the country of Benguela to Zara. A mode of worship, which offered sure and easy means for the expiation of all crimes, was perfectly agreeable to the taste of nations whose religion did not afford them such comfortable prospects. If it was afterwards proscribed in several states, it was owing to the excesses of those who propagated it, which drew upon it this disgrace. It hath even been totally disowned in the countries where it hath been preserved; a few trifling ceremonies are the only remains of it.

The coasts which are in the centre have preserved some local superstitions, the origin of which must be very ancient. They consist in the worship of that innumerable multitude of divinities or fetiches, which every person makes after his own fancy, and for his own use; in the belief of auguries, trials by fire and boiling water, and in the power of *Gris-Gris*. There are some superstitions more dangerous; I mean that blind confidence which they repose in the priests, who are the ministers and promoters of them. The correspondence which they are supposed to hold with the evil spirit, makes them considered as the arbiters of the barrenness and fertility of the country. On this account the first fruits are always offered to them. All their other errors have a social tendency, and conspire to render men more humane and peaceable.

THE country is generally ill peopled. *Manners, customs, and occupations of the people of Guinea.* Habitations are seldom found anywhere but near rivers, lakes, and fountains. In those countries, men are induced to live in a social state, rather from the ties of consanguinity than from any reciprocal wants. Accordingly, small hamlets are found in the same town, and sometimes in the same village, which are so many families, over which a patriarch presides.

There are no traces to be found in these settlements of any great progress in civilization. The houses are constructed with branches of trees, or with rushes fastened to stakes, which are driven far enough into the ground to resist the winds. Windows are seldom seen in them. The covering of the house consists only of leaves, and, if they can be ob-

tained, of the leaves of the palm-tree, which are more proper than others to bear the inclemency of the seasons. The huts of the capital, those even of the despot, are scarce distinguished from the rest, except by their extent. These people are not prevented from forming other constructions, by a want of the best and the finest wood, which they possess in abundance, nor of earth proper to make bricks; but they have never had an idea that it was necessary to take so much trouble to lodge themselves.

The furniture is consistent with the dwelling. In the towns, in the country, in the habitation of the prince, as well as that of the meanest citizens, it consists only of baskets, a few earthen pots, and some utensils made out of gourds. The only difference is, that the poor sleep upon mats, and the rich upon European carpets.

Their food is likewise the same. Rice, cassava, maize, yams, or potatoes, according to the nature of the soil; wild fruits, palm-wine, game, and fish, which all persons get according to their inclination: such is the food which they all live upon, the slaves not excepted.

A girdle tied across their loins, and which we call a *pagne*, is the only clothing of both sexes. Glass beads, which are brought to them, and sold very dear, compose the ornaments of most of the women, and of the few men who wish to make themselves remarkable.

The arts are very trifling in these regions. None are known but those which are commonly found in a rising society, and even those are in their infancy. The ingenuity of a carpenter consists only in building huts. The blacksmith hath no other tools than a small hammer and a wooden anvil, to work the iron which is sent from Europe. The potter makes some clumsy vessels, and some pipes of clay, without the assistance of a mould. The *pagnes* are made only of a plant which grows naturally, and requires no preparation: the length of it constitutes the breadth of the piece. The weaver works it upon his lap, without either loom or shuttle, by passing the tram with his fingers between each of the threads of the chain, in the same manner as our basket-makers make their hurdles. The inhabitants of the country carry salt to the most distant places; and separate it from the sea water by means of a great fire. The slaves, and a small number of free men, are employed in these se-

dentary labours; the rest live in a state of habitual indolence. If they should be roused from this lethargy by some caprice, or by wearisomeness, it is only to go a-hunting or a-fishing. They never demean themselves so far as to cultivate the ground. Agriculture, considered as the meanest of occupations, is left to the women, to whom they allow no greater comfort than the liberty of resting one day after three days of excessive fatigue.

The people of Guinea have manners very similar to each other. Polygamy is authorised throughout the whole extent of this vast region. It must, however, be very uncommonly practised, since all the free men, and most of the slaves, find companions for themselves. The young men consult nothing but their own inclination in their marriage; but their sisters must have the consent of their mothers. The marriage tie is generally respected; nothing but adultery can dissolve it, and this is very uncommon. On the coast of Angola only, the daughters of the chiefs of the state are allowed to choose the husband they like best, even if he should be engaged; they may prevent him from taking another wife; they may be divorced from him when he displeases them; and may even cause his head to be stricken off if he be inconstant. These princesses, if they may be so called, enjoy their privileges with a disdainful haughtiness, and a great deal of severity, as if they meant to be revenged upon the unfortunate man who is under their authority, for the species of slavery to which their sex is condemned.

Their fate is indeed deplorable. Besides being employed in the labours of the field, the women are also obliged to attend to the domestic employments. It rests upon them alone to provide for the subsistence, and to supply all the wants of their families. They never appear before their husbands but in a humiliating posture; they always wait upon him at table, and retire afterwards to feed upon what he either could not or would not eat. This state of labour and humiliation is not confined to the common people; the women in the towns, the wives of the rich, of the great, and even of the sovereigns, are in the same condition; they derive neither comfort nor prerogative from the rank or the opulence of their husbands.

While they waste in the service of their tyrants the small proportion of strength bestowed upon them by nature, these barbarians spend their useless days in a state of total inaction. Assembled under thick foliages, they pass their time in smoking, singing, or dancing. The same amusements are repeated every day; and their pleasures are never interrupted by disputes. A decency and propriety prevail in them, which could not reasonably be expected from a people so little enlightened.

Their disinterestedness is a no less surprising circumstance. If we except the coasts, where the example of our robberies hath made them robbers, a great indifference for riches is observed in all parts. Even the wisest among them seldom think of the morrow; and accordingly, hospitality is the virtue universally practised. The man who should not divide the game or the fish he had caught with his neighbours, his relations, and his friends, would draw upon himself the public contempt. With them, the reproach of avarice is beyond any other. It is bestowed upon the Europeans, who give nothing without a compensation; which induces these Africans to call them *close-fisted*.

Such is the general character of the people of Guinea. It now remains to speak of the customs which distinguish the inhabitants of one country from those of another.

On the banks of the Niger, the women are generally handsome, if beauty may be said to consist in symmetry of proportion, and not in colour. Modest, affable, and faithful, an air of innocence appears in their looks, and their language is an indication of their bashfulness. The names of *Zilia*, *Calypso*, *Fanny*, *Zama*, which seem to be names of voluptuousness, are pronounced with an inflection of voice, of the softness and sweetness of which our organs are not susceptible. The men are of a proper size, their skin is as black as ebony, and their features and countenances pleasing. The habit of taming horses, and hunting wild beasts, gives them an air of dignity. They do not easily put up with an affront; but the example of those animals they have reared, inspires them with boundless gratitude for a master who treats them with indulgence. It is impossible to find servants more attentive, more sober, and who have stronger attachments; but they do not make good husbandmen;

because their body is not habituated to stoop and bend towards the ground, in order to clear it.

The complexion of the Africans degenerates towards the east. The people of this climate are strong, but short. They have an air of strength, which is denoted by firm muscles; and the features of their faces are spread out, but have no expression. The figures impressed on their foreheads and on their cheeks increase their natural deformity. An ungrateful soil, which is not improvable by culture, hath forced them to have recourse to fishing, though the sea, which they can scarce venture upon, on account of a bar that runs along the coast, seems to divert them from it. Thus repulsed, as it were, by these two elements, they have fought for aid among adjacent nations more favoured by nature; from whom they have derived their subsistence by selling them salt. A spirit of traffic hath been diffused among them since the arrival of the Europeans; because ideas are unfolded in all men in proportion to the variety of objects that are presented to them; and because more combinations are necessary to barter a slave for several sorts of merchandize, than to sell a bushel of salt. Though they be well adapted to all employments where strength only is required, yet they are unfit for the internal duties of domestic life. This condition of life is repugnant to their customs, according to which they are paid separately for every thing they do. And, indeed, the reciprocation of daily labour and daily recompense is, perhaps, one of the best incentives to industry among all men. The wives of these mercantile negroes have neither the amiableness, modesty, discretion, nor beauty, of the women of the Niger, and they appear to have less sensibility. On comparing the two nations, it might, perhaps, be imagined, that the one consisted of the lowest class of people in a polished and civilized city, and that the other had enjoyed the advantages of superior education. Their language is a strong indication of their character. The accents of the one have an extreme sweetness, those of the other are harsh and dry, like the soil they inhabit. Their vivacity, even in pleasures, resembles the furious transports of anger.

Beyond the river Volta, in Benin, and in the other countries known under the general name of the Gold coast, the people have a smooth skin, and are of a dark black colour;

their teeth are beautiful; they are of a middling stature, but well shaped, and have a haughty countenance. Their faces, though agreeable enough, would be much more so, if the women were not used to scar them, and the men to burn their foreheads. The basis of their creed is a me-tempsychoſis of a peculiar kind: they believe, that in whatever place they remove to, or wherever they are transported, they ſhall return after their death, whether cauſed by the laws of nature, or by their own hands, to their native country. This conviction conſtitutes their happineſs; becauſe they conſider their country as the moſt delightful abode in the univerſe. This pleaſing error conduces to humanize them. Foreigners, who reſide in this climate, are treated with reſpectful civility, from a perſuaſion that they are come there to receive the recompenſe due to their good conduct. Theſe people have a diſpoſition to cheerfulneſs not obſervable in the neighbouring nations; they are inclined to labour, have principles of equity ſeldom altered by circumſtances, and a great facility of adapting themſelves to foreign manners. They are tenacious of their commercial cuſtoms, even when they are not advantageous to them. The method of trafficking with them was, for a long time, the ſame that had been at firſt practiſed among them. The firſt veſſel that arrived diſpoſed of its cargo before another was permitted to trade. Each had its turn. The commodities were ſold at the ſame fixed price to all. It is but very lately that the nation had reſolved to avail itſelf of the advantages it might derive from the competition between the European nations frequenting its ports.

The people ſituated between the line and Zara have all a great reſemblance to each other. They are well made. Their bodies are leſs robuſt than thoſe of the inhabitants to the north of the equator; and though there be ſome marks on their faces, none of thoſe ſcars are to be perceived which are ſo ſhocking at firſt ſight. Their feaſts are accompanied with military ſports, which revive the idea of our ancient tournaments; with this difference, that in Europe they conſtituted the exerciſes of a warlike nation, whereas in Africa they are the amuſements of a timid people. The women are not admitted to theſe public diverſions. Aſſembled together in certain houſes, they ſpend their day in private; and no men are ever admitted into their ſociety.

The pride of rank is the strongest passion of these people, who are naturally peaceable. A certain degree of ceremony obtains both at the court of princes and in private life. Upon the most trivial occurrences, they hasten to their friends, either to congratulate them or to condole with them. A marriage occasions visiting for three months. The funeral obsequies of a person of distinction continue sometimes two years. Those who are related to him in any degree, carry his remains through several provinces. The crowd gathers as they proceed, and no person departs till the corpse is deposited in the tomb, with all the demonstrations of the deepest sorrow. So determined a taste for ceremony hath proved favourable to superstition, and superstition hath promoted a spirit of indolence.

From Zara to the river of Coanza, the ancient customs still remain; but they are blended with a confused mixture of European manners, which are not to be found elsewhere. It is probable that the Portuguese, who have large settlements in this country, and who were desirous of introducing the christian religion among them, had a greater intercourse with them than other nations, who having only factories to the north of the line, have been entirely engaged in carrying on their commerce.

The reader need not be told, that all we have related concerning the people of Guinea, ought only to be applied to that class which, in all countries, stamps the character of a nation. The inferior orders and slaves are further removed from this resemblance, in proportion as they are debased or degraded by their occupations or their conditions. The most discerning inquirers have, however, imagined that the difference of conditions did not produce in this people varieties so distinguishable as we find in the states which are situated between the Elbe and the Tiber, which exhibit nearly the same extent of coast as the distance between the Niger and the Coanza. The further men depart from nature, the less must they resemble one another. Nature is a straight line, from which there are various ways of deviating. The counsels of nature are speedy and tolerably uniform; but the suggestions arising from taste, from fancy, from caprice, from personal interest, from circumstances, from passions, from the accidental events of health or sickness, and even from dreams, are so numerous and so various,

that they are not, neither can they ever be exhausted. One violent man is sufficient to lead a thousand more astray, from motives of condescension, flattery, or imitation. If a woman of rank be desirous of concealing some natural defect, she immediately contrives something for that purpose. This is soon adopted by her companions, though they have not the same reason for it. Thus it is, that from one eccentric circle to another, a fashion is extended, and becomes national. This instance is sufficient to explain an infinite number of singularities, which our sagacity would in vain be tortured in finding out the reasons of, in the wants, the pains, or pleasures, of mankind. The diversity of civil and moral institutions, which often are neither more combined, nor less casual, also necessarily occasions a difference in the moral character and in the natural customs of men, which is unknown to societies less complicated. Besides, nature being more powerful under the torrid than under the temperate zone, does not permit the influence of manners to exert itself so strongly. Men in these countries bear a greater similitude to one another, because they owe every thing to nature, and very little to art. In Europe, an extensive and diversified commerce, varying and multiplying the enjoyments, the fortunes, and several conditions of men, adds likewise to the differences which the climate, the laws, and the common prejudices, have established among active and laborious nations.

*Ancient state of
the trade of
Guinea.*

IN Guinea, trade hath never been able to cause a material alteration in the manners of its inhabitants. It formerly consisted only of certain exchanges of salt and dried fish, which were consumed by the nations remote from the coast. These gave in return stuffs made of a kind of thread, which was only a woody substance, closely adhering to the inner side of the bark of a tree peculiar to these climates. The air hardens it, and renders it fit for every kind of weaving. Bonnets, scarfs, and aprons to serve for girdles, are made of it, which vary in shape according to the particular mode of each nation. The natural colour of the thread is a pale grey. The dew, which bleaches our flax, gives it a citron colour, which rich people prefer. The black dye, generally used among the people, is extracted

from the bark of the tree of which this thread is made, by simple infusion in water.

The first Europeans who frequented the western coasts of Africa fixed a price on wax, ivory, gum, and wood for dying, which, before that time, had been thought of little value. A small quantity of gold, which had been formerly carried off by caravans from the states of Barbary, was likewise given in exchange to their navigators. This gold came from the inland parts, and chiefly from Bambouk, an aristocratic state, under the twelfth and thirteenth degrees of north latitude, and where each village was governed by a chief called farim. This rich metal is so common in this country, that it is found almost indiscriminately everywhere, merely by scraping the surface of the earth, which is clayish, light, and mixed with sand. When the mine is very rich, it is digged only to the depth of a few feet, and never deeper; though it hath been observed, that the lower it was digged, the more gold it afforded. The people are too indolent to pursue a toil which constantly becomes more fatiguing, and too ignorant to prevent the inconveniencies it would be attended with. Their negligence and their folly are so extraordinary, that in washing the gold, in order to separate it from the earth, they only preserve the larger pieces: the light parts pass away with the water, which flows down an inclined plain.

The inhabitants of Bambouk do not work these mines at all times, nor are they at liberty to do it when they choose. They are obliged to wait till private or public wants determine the farims to grant this permission. When it is proclaimed, all who are able to avail themselves of this advantage meet at the appointed place. When their work is finished, a division is made. Half of the gold goes to the lord, and the remainder is equally distributed among the labourers. Those who want gold at any other time than that of the general digging, search for it in the beds of the torrents, where it is very common.

Several Europeans have endeavoured to penetrate into a region which contains so many treasures. Two or three of them, who had succeeded in approaching the coast, were unmercifully repulsed. M. David, governor of the French in Senegal, in 1740, thought of sending a prince of that

country, in order to lay waste the borders of the *Feleme*, from whence *Bambouk* received all its provisions. This unfortunate country was upon the point of being destroyed, in the midst of its piles of gold, when the author of this calamity proposed to them, that he would send them provisions from *Fort Galam*, which was only at forty leagues distance, if they would consent to receive him, and permit his people to work the mines. These conditions were accepted, and the observance of them was again sworn to the author of the proposal, who went himself to those provinces four years after; but the treaty produced no effect. Only the remembrance of the hardships that had been endured, and of those that had been apprehended, determined the people to cultivate a soil, which had produced, till then, nothing but metals. It seems that the gold hath been abandoned, and that the attention of all men hath been turned to the slave trade.

The commerce of Guinea hath been extended by the sale of slaves. THE property which some men have acquired over others in *Guinea*, is of very high antiquity. It is generally established there, excepting in some small districts, where liberty hath, as it were, retired, and is still maintained. No proprietor, however, hath a right to sell a man who is born in a state of servitude. He can only dispose of those slaves whom he gets either by war, in which every prisoner is a slave unless exchanged, or in lieu of compensation for some injury; or if he hath received them as a testimony of acknowledgment. This law, which seems to be made in favour of one who is born a slave, to indulge him in the enjoyment of his family, and of his country, is yet ineffectual, since the Europeans have established luxury on the coasts of *Africa*. It is every day eluded by concerted quarrels, which two proprietors mutually dissemble, in order to be reciprocally condemned, each in his turn, to a fine, which is paid in persons born slaves, the disposal of whom is allowed by the sanction of the same law.

Corruption, contrary to its ordinary progress, hath advanced from private persons to princes. The procuring of slaves hath given frequent occasion to wars, as they are ex-

cited in Europe, in order to obtain soldiers. The custom has been established of punishing with slavery, not only those who have attempted the lives or properties of citizens, but those also who were incapable of paying their debts, and those who have violated conjugal faith. This punishment, in process of time, has been inflicted for the most trivial offences, after having been at first reserved only for the greatest crimes. Prohibitions, even of things indifferent, have been constantly multiplied, in order to increase the revenues raised from the fines, by increasing the number of offences. Injustice hath known no bounds or restraints. At a great distance from the coast there are chiefs, who give orders for every thing they meet with in the villages around them to be carried off. The children are thrown into sacks; the men and women are gagged to stifle their cries. If the ravagers should be stopped by a superior force, they are conducted before the prince, who always disowns the commission he hath given, and, under pretence of doing justice, instantly sells his agents to the ships he hath treated with.

Notwithstanding these infamous arts, the people of the coast have found it impossible to supply the demands of the merchants. They have experienced what every nation must, that can trade only with its species. Slaves are to the commerce of the Europeans in Africa, what gold is in the commerce we carry on in the New World. The heads of the negroes represent the specie of the state of Guinea. Every day this specie is carried off, and nothing is left them but articles of consumption. Their capital gradually vanishes, because it cannot be renewed, by reason of the speedy consumptions. Thus the trade for blacks would long since have been entirely lost, if the inhabitants of the coasts had not imparted their luxury to the people of the inland countries, from whence they now draw the greatest part of the slaves that are put into our hands. Thus the trade of the Europeans, by gradual advances, hath almost exhausted the only vendible commodities of this nation.

In the space of twenty years this circumstance hath raised the price of slaves almost to four times above the former cost. The reason is this: the slaves are chiefly paid for in merchandize from the East Indies, which hath doubled its

value in Europe. A double quantity of these goods must be given in Africa. Thus the colonies of America, where the sale for blacks is concluded, are obliged to support these several augmentations, and consequently to pay four times more than they formerly did.

Notwithstanding this, the distant proprietor who sells his slave, receives a less quantity of merchandize than the person received fifty years ago, who sold his slave in the neighbourhood of the coast. The profits intercepted by passing through different hands, the expences of transport, the imposts, sometimes of three per cent. that must be paid to those princes through whose territories they pass, sink the difference betwixt the sum which the first proprietor receives, and that which the European trader pays. These expences continually increase on account of the great distances of the places where there are still slaves to be sold. The farther off the first sale is, the greater will be the difficulties attending the journey. They will become such, that of the sum which the European merchant will be able to pay, there will remain so little to offer to the first seller, that he will rather choose to keep his slave. All trade of this kind will then be at an end. In order, therefore, to support it effectually, our traders must furnish at an exorbitant price, and sell in proportion to the colonies; which, on their part, not being able to dispose of their produce but at a very advanced price, will no longer find a consumption for it. But till that time comes, which is, perhaps, not so distant as the colonists may imagine, they will, without the least remorse, continue to make the lives and labours of the negroes subservient to their interests. They will find navigators who will hazard the purchasing of them, and these will meet with tyrants who will sell them.

Slave merchants collect themselves into companies, and forming a species of caravans, in the space of two or three hundred leagues they conduct several files of thirty or forty slaves, all laden with water or corn, which are necessary to their subsistence in those barren deserts through which they pass. The manner of securing them without much incommoding their march, is ingeniously contrived. A fork of wood, from eight to nine feet long, is put round the neck of each slave. A pin of iron, rivetted, secures the fork at

the back part in such a manner that the head cannot disengage itself. The handle of the fork, the wood of which is very heavy, falls before, and so embarrasses the person who is tied to it, that though he hath his arms and legs at liberty, he can neither walk, nor lift up the fork. When they get ready for their march, they range the slaves on the same line, and support and tie the extremity of each fork on the shoulder of the foremost slave, and proceed in this manner from one to another, till they come to the first, the extremity of whose fork is carried by one of the guides. Few restraints are imposed that are not felt by the persons who impose them. In order that these traders may enjoy the refreshment of sleep without uneasiness, they tie the arms of every slave to the tail of the fork which he carries. In this condition he can neither run away, nor make any attempt to recover his liberty. These precautions have been found indispensable, because if the slave can but break his chain, he becomes free. The public faith, which secures to the proprietor the possession of his slave, and which at all times delivers him up into his hands, is silent with regard to a slave and a trader who exercises the most contemptible of all professions.

Reader, while thou art perusing this horrid account, is not thy soul filled with the same indignation as I experience in writing it? Dost thou not, in imagination, rush with fury upon those infamous conductors? Dost thou not break these forks with which these unfortunate people are confined? and dost thou not restore them to their liberty?

Great numbers of slaves arrive together, especially when they come from distant countries. This arrangement is necessary, in order to diminish the expence which is unavoidable in conducting them. The interval between one journey and another, which by this system of economy is already made too distant, may become still greater by particular circumstances. The most usual are the rains, which cause the rivers to overflow, and put a stop to this trade. The season most favourable for travelling in the interior parts of Africa, is from February to September; and it is from September to March that the return of these slave traders produces the greatest plenty of this traffic on the coasts.

*Account of the
coasts where
foreign naviga-
tors land in
search of slaves.*

THE trade of the Europeans is carried on to the south and north of the line. The first coast begins at Cape Blanco: very near this are Arguin and Portendic. The Portuguese discovered them in 1444, and settled there the next year. They were deprived of them in 1638 by the Dutch, who, in their turn, ceded them to the English in 1666, from whom they recovered them some months after. Lewis XIV again drove them away in the beginning of 1678, and contented himself with having the works destroyed.

At this period, Frederic William, that great elector of Brandenburg, was meditating upon the means of improving his dominions, which till then had been incessantly ruined by wars, which were seldom interrupted. Some Dutch merchants, discontented with the monopoly which excluded them from the western parts of Africa, persuaded him to build forts in this immense district, and to have slaves purchased there, which would be sold to advantage in the New World. This scheme was thought to be useful, and the company formed to carry it on obtained, in 1682, three settlements on the Gold coast, and one in the island of Arguin three years afterwards. This new body was successively ruined by the oppositions of the rival nations, by the unfaithfulness or the inexperience of its agents, and by the depredations of the pirates. As nothing but the name of them was remaining, the king of Prussia sold, in 1717, to the Dutch company, possessions which had been long useless to him. These republicans had not yet taken possession of Arguin, when it was again attacked in 1721, and taken, by the orders of the court of Versailles, who had been maintained in that conquest by the treaty of Nimeguen. The Dutch soon after planted their flag there, but were obliged to take it down again in 1724.

From that period to 1763, France remained in quiet possession of these forts. The British ministry, who had required the sacrifice of the Niger, insisted, besides, that they should be dependent upon it. This pretension does not appear to us to be well founded. It is only necessary to see the grants made to the societies which have successively exercised the monopoly in Senegal, to be convinced that Arguin and Portendic were never comprehended in

their charter. England, however, doth not permit the French, nor other navigators, to approach these latitudes; even its own subjects go there no more, since those precious gums, from which they have acquired some importance, have been conveyed by the Niger.

This river, which is more commonly called Senegal, is very considerable, is reckoned by some geographers to have more than eight hundred leagues of extent. It hath been proved, that from June to November, it is navigable throughout a space of three hundred and twenty leagues. The bar which runs across the mouth of the river prohibits the entrance of it to all ships which draw more than eight or nine feet of water. The other ships are obliged to cast anchor very near this spot, in an exceeding good bottom. Their cargoes are brought to them in light vessels from Fort St. Lewis, which is built in a small island near the sea. They consist only of the gums which have been collected during the year, and of twelve or fifteen hundred slaves. The gums are sent from the left shore; and the slaves from the right, which is the only one that can be said to be peopled, since the tyrants of Morocco have extended their ferocious sway to these regions.

Since the peace of 1763 hath assured to Great Britain the possession of Senegal, the conquest of which was made by its navy during the course of the war, the French are confined to the coast which begins at Cape Blanco, and terminates at the river Gambia. Although they have not been disturbed in the claim they have to the right of an exclusive trade through that immense space, yet they have scarcely received annually from their factories of Zoal, Portudal, and Albreda, three or four hundred slaves. Goree, which is only a league distant from the continent, and which is no more than four hundred toises in length, and one hundred in breadth, is the chief of these wretched settlements. During the hostilities begun in 1756, this island, which hath a good harbour, and which may be easily defended, fell into the hands of the English; but the subsequent treaties restored it to its ancient masters.

Till the year 1772, this country had been open to all the traders of the nation. At this period, a restless and turbulent man persuaded some credulous citizens, that it would be an easy matter to get to Bambouk, and to other mines

of equal wealth. An ignorant administration encouraged the illusion, by granting an exclusive privilege; and considerable sums were expended in pursuit of this chimerical prospect. The direction of this monopoly, two years after, passed into the hands of more prudent men, who confined themselves to the purchase of the slaves that are to be brought to Cayenne, where the company have obtained an immense territory.

The river *Gambia* would be navigable for the space of two hundred leagues for vessels of a considerable size; but they all stop at the distance of eight or ten leagues from the mouth of that river at *Fort James*. This settlement, which hath been conquered, ransomed, and pillaged, seven or eight times in the course of a century, is situated in an island, which is not a mile in circumference. The English trade annually there for three thousand slaves, which come mostly, as at *Senegal*, from very distant and inland countries.

The ten *Cape de Verd* islands, at no great distance from the shores, and of which *Sant Yago* is the principal, were discovered by the Portuguese about the year 1449. This small archipelago, which, though much divided, hilly, and not well watered, would be able to furnish all the productions of the New World, scarce supplies sufficient subsistence to the few negroes, most of them free, who have escaped from a system of tyranny continued for four centuries. The weight of the fetters which oppress them was rendered still more burdensome, when they were put under the power of a company which had the exclusive right both of supplying all their wants, and of purchasing the commodities they had to sell. Accordingly, the exports of that soil, though of tolerable extent, were reduced for Europe to the plant known by the name of *perella*, which is made use of in dying scarlet; to a few oxen and mules for America, and for that part of Africa which is subject to the court of *Lisbon*; to a small quantity of sugar, and to several pagnes of cotton. The fate of this unfortunate country was not to be altered. No one could appeal in its favour, while, from the general to the soldier, from the bishop to the curate, every man was in the pay of the company, which was at length abolished.

Several Portuguese, who had gone to the Cape de Verd islands, soon arrived upon the banks of the river of Casamane and Cacheo, and upon the largest of the Bissagos islands. Their descendants degenerated so much in process of time, that they scarce differed from the natives. They have always preserved, however, the ambition of considering themselves as sovereigns of the country, where they had built three villages and two small forts. The rival nations have paid very little respect to this pretension, and have discontinued to trade in competition with the vessels arrived from the Cape de Verd islands, from the Brazils, and from Lisbon.

Serre-Leone is not under the British dominion, although the subjects of that power have concentrated almost all the commercial transactions in two private factories, very anciently established. Exclusive of the wax, ivory and gold, which are found there, they receive annually four or five thousand slaves either from this or from the neighbouring rivers.

Next to this mart we meet with the Grain coast, and the Ivory coast, which occupy the space of one hundred and fifty leagues. Rice, ivory, and slaves, are purchased there. The navigators, form temporary factories upon some of these coasts, most frequently wait at anchor till the blacks come of their own accord, upon their canoes, to propose the things they mean to barter. It is said, that this custom hath been established, since repeated acts of ferociousness have evinced the danger of disembarking.

The English since formed a settlement at the Cape of Apolonia, where the slave trade is considerable; but they have not yet obtained an exclusive commerce, which they wished for, and which, perhaps, they flattered themselves they should obtain.

After Cape Apolonia begins the Gold coast, which terminates at the river Volta. It is one hundred and thirty leagues in extent. As the country is divided into a great many small states, and as the inhabitants are the most robust men of Guinea, the factories of the commercial nations of Europe have been exceedingly multiplied here. Five of them belong to the Danes; twelve or thirteen, of which St. George de la Mina is the capital, belong to the Dutch; and the English have conquered, or formed, nine or ten of

them, the chief of which is Cape Corso. The French, who saw themselves, with regret, excluded from a region abounding in slaves, attempted, in 1749, to appropriate Anamabou to themselves. They were fortifying themselves in it, with the consent of the natives of the country, when their workmen were driven away by the cannon of the ships of Great Britain. An able merchant, who was then at London, upon the news of this outrage, expressed his astonishment at a conduct so imprudent. *Sir*, said a minister to him, who was in great favour with this enlightened people, *if we were to be just to the French, we should not exist thirty years longer.* At this period the English formed a firm establishment at Anamabou, and since that time they have never suffered any competitor in this important market.

At the distance of eight leagues from the river Volta is Kela, which abounds in articles of subsistence. There it is that the navigators go to supply themselves with provisions; and from thence it is that they send their canoes, or boats, in search of proper places to establish their trade in.

The little Popo often attracts them. The English and the French frequent this latitude; but the Portuguese resort there in still greater numbers, for the following reason:

The people who formerly held the sway in Africa, were reduced, in process of time, to such a state of weakness, that, in order to preserve the liberty of trading on the Gold coast, they agreed to pay the tenth of their cargoes to the Dutch. This shameful tribute, which hath always been paid regularly, was so disadvantageous to the privateers of Bahia and of Fernambucca, the only ones that frequent that coast, that they agreed among themselves, that no more than one vessel of each of these two provinces should ever be in any port. The rest remain at little Popo, till their turn for trading comes about.

Juida, at fourteen leagues distance from the little Popo, is famous for the number and the quality of the slaves which come from thence. It is open only to the English, the French, and the Portuguese. Each of these nations hath a fort there, built in the island of Gregoi, two miles from the shore. The chiefs of these factories undertake, every year, a journey of thirty leagues, in order to carry to the sovereign of the country presents, which he receives, and requires as an homage.

At the distance of eight leagues from Juida, is Epee; where there are sometimes a great many slaves, but most commonly none. Accordingly, this harbour is frequently void of ships.

A little beyond this is Porto Novo. The trade, which in other places is settled on the sea-coast, is carried on here in the inland parts, at seven leagues from the shore. This inconvenience made it languid for a long time, but it is now very considerable. The passion for the tobacco of Brazil, which is still more prevailing at this place than in any other part of the coast, gives a considerable superiority to the Portuguese. The English and French are obliged to form their cargoes from the refuse of theirs.

Badagry is only at three leagues distance from Porto Novo. A great many slaves are brought there. At the time when all nations were admitted, the navigators could only make their purchases, and dispose of their cargoes, one after the other; but since the English and the Dutch are secluded, the French and the Portuguese are allowed to trade in competition, because their merchandizes are very different. This is the part of the coast the most frequented by French privateers.

Ahoni, which is separated from Badagry by an interval of fourteen or fifteen leagues, is situated in the islands of Curamo, in a difficult, marshy, and unhealthy port. This mart is principally, almost exclusively indeed, frequented by the English, who come there in large sloops, and carry on their trade between the islands and the neighbouring continent.

From the river Volta to this archipelago, the coast is inaccessible. A sand bank, against which the waves of the sea break with great violence, obliges the navigators, who are attracted to these latitudes by the hopes of gain, to make use of Indian boats, and of the natives of the country, to land their cargoes, and to bring back the goods they receive in exchange. Their vessels are safely anchored upon an exceeding good bottom, at the distance of three or four leagues from the coast.

The river of Benin, which abounds in ivory and in slaves, receives some ships. Its trade is fallen almost entirely into the hands of the English. The French and the Dutch

have been disgusted with the character of the natives, who are indeed less savage than those of the neighbouring countries, but so extremely capricious, that it is never known what kind of merchandize they will choose to accept in exchange.

After Cape Formosa, are the Old and the New Calbary. The coast is low, under water for six months in the year, and very unwholesome. All the water is tainted; shipwrecks are frequent there, and whole crews are sometimes the victims of the intemperance of the climate. These various calamities have not been able to prevent the navigators of Great Britain from frequenting these dangerous latitudes. They purchase there, every year, seven or eight thousand blacks, but at a very low price. The French, who formerly seldom resorted to these marts, now begin to land there in greater numbers. The ships, which draw above twelve feet water, are obliged to cast anchor near the island of Panis, where the chief of these barbarous countries resides, and where he hath drawn a considerable trade.

Trade is much more brisk on the Gabon. This is a large river, which waters an immense plain, and which, together with several other less considerable rivers, forms a multitude of islands, more or less extensive, which are each of them governed by a separate chief. There is scarce any country more plentiful, more sunk under water, or more unwholesome. The French, more volatile than enterprising, seldom go there, notwithstanding their wants. The Portuguese of Princes and St. Thomas islands send only a few sloops. The Dutch export from thence ivory, wax, and woods for dying. The English buy up almost all the slaves which the petty nations, that are perpetually intent upon each other's destruction, make of the prisoners taken on both sides, in the wars carried on between them. There is no considerable staple where the exchanges are made. The Europeans are obliged to penetrate, with their boats, to the extent of fifty or sixty leagues, in these infectious morasses. This custom prolongs the trade excessively, it is destructive to an infinite number of sailors, and occasions some murders. These calamities would cease, if a general mart were established in Parrot island, situated at the distance of ten leagues from the mouth of the Gabon, and where ships of a tolerable size can land. The English

attempted it, undoubtedly with a view of fortifying themselves there, and in hopes of obtaining an exclusive trade. Their agent was murdered in 1769, and matters have remained as they were before.

It must be observed, that the slaves which come from Benin, from Calbary, and from Gabon, are very inferior to those which are bought elsewhere. They are therefore sold as much as possible to the foreign colonies by the English, who frequent these indifferent markets more than any other nation. Such is the state of things to the north of the line.

On the south, the markets are much less numerous, but generally more considerable. The first that presents itself, after Cape de Lopo, is Mayumba. Till the ships arrive at this harbour, the sea is too rough to admit approaching the land. A bay, which is two leagues over at its mouth, and one league in depth, affords a safe asylum to the vessels that are impeded by the calms and the currents, which are frequent in those latitudes. The landing is easy near a river. It may be imagined, that the deserts of a climate, too full of morasses, hath been the only reason that hath kept the Europeans, and consequently the Africans, away. If from time to time a few captives are sold there, they are purchased by the English and by the Dutch, who go there regularly to take in cargoes of a kind of red wood, that is employed in dying.

At Cape Segundo is found another bay, which is very healthy, more spacious, and more commodious, than even that of Mayumba, and in which water and wood may be obtained with ease and security. All these advantages must undoubtedly have drawn a considerable trade there, if the time and the expences which are requisite to reach to the extremity of a long slip of land, had not disgusted the slave merchants of it.

They have preferred Loango, where they anchor at eight or nine toises distance from the river, in three or four fathom water, upon a muddy bottom. Such is the agitation of the sea, that it is impossible to land on the coast, except upon Indian boats. The European factories are at a league's distance from the town, upon an eminence, which is considered as very unwholesome. This is the reason why, notwithstanding the blacks are cheaper there than any

where else, and the natives are less difficult about the quality of the merchandize, yet the navigators seldom land at Loango, except when the competition is too great in the other ports.

At Molembo, the vessels are obliged to stop at one league's distance from the shore; and the boats, in order to land, must clear a bar that is rather dangerous. The transactions are carried on upon a very agreeable mountain, but very difficult of access. The slaves are here in greater number, and of superior quality to those upon the rest of the coast.

The bay of Gabinda is safe and commodious. The sea is smooth enough to admit of refitting the vessels in case of necessity. Anchor is cast at the foot of the houses, and the business is transacted at the distance of one hundred and fifty paces from the shore.

It hath long been said, and it cannot be too often repeated, that the climate is exceedingly destructive in these three ports, and especially at Loango. Let us endeavour to find out the reasons of this calamity, and let us see whether it may not be remedied.

The grass which grows on the coast is almost always four or five feet high, and receives abundant dews during the night. The Europeans who cross these fields in the morning are seized with violent, and frequently fatal, colics, unless the natural heat of the intestines, which are probably chilled by the impression of this dew, be restored without delay by brandy. Would not this danger be avoided, by keeping away from this grass till the sun should have dissipated the kind of venom that had fallen upon it?

The sea is unwholesome in these latitudes. Its waves, of a yellowish cast, and which are covered with whales blubber, must obstruct the pores of the skin in those who bathe in it, and check their perspiration. This is probably the cause of the burning fevers which carry off such a prodigious number of sailors. In order to prevent these destructive maladies, it would perhaps be sufficient to employ the natives of the country in all the services that cannot be done without entering into the water.

In that country, the days are excessively hot, the nights damp and cold, which is a dangerous alternative. The inconveniences of it might be avoided by lighting fires in

the bed chambers. This precaution would make the two extremes less sensible, and would produce the necessary degree of temperature for a man who is asleep, and who cannot put on additional coverings in proportion as the cold of the night increases.

Inaction and wearisomeness are fatal to the crews of ships that are commonly detained four or five months on the coast. This double inconvenience would be removed, if a third of them were constantly employed alternately on land, in those trifling labours which are improperly thrown upon the negroes, and which would occupy without fatiguing them.

It will perhaps be said, that we are for ever attending to the preservation of man. But what object is there which ought more seriously to engage our thoughts? Is it gold, or silver, or precious stones? Some person of an atrocious disposition might imagine it. Should he dare to avow such a sentiment in my presence, I would say to him, I know not who thou art; but nature had formed thee to be a despot, a conqueror, or an executioner; for she hath divested thee of all kind of benevolence towards thy fellow creature. If we should happen to mistake with regard to the means we propose for their preservation, we shall be happy to find them censured, and to have some more effectual means suggested.

Our confidence, however, in the advice we have just been giving, is the more confirmed, as it is founded upon experiments made by one of the most intelligent seamen we have ever known. This able man lost only one sailor during a twelvemonth's stay at Loango itself; and even that sailor had infringed the orders that were given.

A very singular custom is generally observed in the country of Angola; and the people are equally ignorant of its origin and of its tendency. The kings of those provinces are not allowed to have in their possession, nor even to touch, any European goods, except metals, arms, and carved wood or ivory. It is probable that some of their predecessors have submitted to this self-denial, in order to diminish the inordinate desire of their subjects for foreign merchandize. If this was the motive of that institution, the success hath not answered the expectation. The lowest classes of men intoxicate themselves with our liquors whenever they have the

means of purchasing of them; and the wealthy, the great, and even the ministers, generally clothe themselves with our linens and our stuffs. They take care only to quit these dresses when they go to court, where it is not allowed to display a luxury prohibited to the despot alone.

There is no other landing place from the last port we have mentioned till we come to the Zaire. The river Ambris is at no great distance from this; it receives a few small vessels sent from Europe itself. More considerable ships, which arrive at Loango, at Molembo, and at Gabinda, likewise send some boats there occasionally to trade for negroes, and to shorten their stay on the coast; but the traders who are settled there do not always allow this competition.

These difficulties are not to be apprehended at Mossula, where no ships can enter. The English, the French, and the Dutch, who carry on their trade in the most important harbours, send their sloops freely there, which seldom return without a few slaves, purchased at a more reasonable price than in the larger markets.

After Mossula, the Portuguese possessions begin, which extend along the coast from the eighth to the eighteenth degree of south latitude, and sometimes as far as a hundred leagues in the inland parts. This great space is divided into many provinces, the several districts of which are governed by chiefs, who are all tributary to Lisbon. Seven or eight feeble corps, of ten or twelve soldiers each, are sufficient to keep these people in subjection. These negroes are supposed to be free, but the slightest misdemeanour plunges them into servitude. Plentiful mines of iron, superior in quality to any that has been found in any other part of the globe, have been discovered a few years since in the midst of these forests, in a place which hath been called the New Oeiras. The count de Souza, at that time governor of this district, and at present ambassador at the court of Spain, caused them to be worked; but they have been forsaken since the mother country hath passed from the yoke of tyranny under that of superstition. This active commandant likewise extended the frontiers of the empire under his command. His ambition was, to reach as far as the rich mines of Monomopata, and to pave the way for his

successors to pursue their conquests as far as the territory which his nation is in possession of in the Mozambique.

We leave it to others to judge of the possibility or the fancifulness, the inutility or the importance, of this communication. We will only observe, that the first Portuguese settlement, near the ocean is Bamba, the chief business of which consists in furnishing the woods which may be wanted at St. Paul de Loanda.

This capital of the Portuguese settlements in Africa hath a tolerably good harbour. It is formed by a sandy island, and protected at its entrance, which is very narrow, by regular fortifications, and defended by a garrison, which would be sufficient, did it not consist of officers and soldiers, most of whom are branded by the laws, or are at least exiles. The population of the town consists of seven or eight hundred white men, and of about three thousand negroes, or free mulattoes.

St. Philip de Benguela, which belongs to the same nation hath but one harbour, where the sea is often very rough. The town, much less considerable than St. Paul, is covered by an indifferent fort, which would easily be reduced to ashes by the guns of the ships. No very obstinate resistance would be made by two or three hundred Africans who guard, and who, even at St. Pauls, are most of them distributed in posts, at some distance from one another.

At ten leagues beyond St. Philips, we find another Portuguese settlement, where numerous flocks are bred, and where the salt is gathered that is necessary for the people subject to that crown. The settlements and trade of the Europeans do not extend upon the western coast of Africa.

The Portuguese vessels which frequent these latitudes all repair to St. Pauls or to St. Philips. They purchase a greater number of slaves in the first of these markets, and in the latter, slaves that are more robust. These ships are not in general dispatched from the mother-country, but from the Brazils, and almost solely from Rio de Janeiro. As the Portuguese have an exclusive privilege, they pay less for these unfortunate blacks than they are sold for anywhere else. It is with tobacco, and with cowries, which they get upon the spot itself, as well as the tobacco, that they pay

upon the Gold coast ; and upon the coast of Angola they give in exchange some tobacco, rums, and coarse linens.

*In what number,
at what price, and
with what mer-
chandize, the slaves
are purchased.*

IN the early times, after the discovery of the western Africa, the population of that immense portion of the globe did not sensibly decrease. Its inhabitants were not at that time employed ; but, in proportion as the conquests and the cultivations were increased in America, more slaves were required ; this want hath gradually increased ; and since the peace of 1763, eighty thousand of these wretched inhabitants have been carried off from Guinea every year : these unfortunate men have not all arrived in the New World. According to the natural course of things, about one-eighth part of them must have perished in the passage. Two thirds of these deplorable victims of our avarice have come from the north, and the remainder from the south of the line.

They were originally purchased everywhere at a very cheap rate. Their value hath gradually increased, and in a more remarkable manner, during the course of the last fifteen years. In 1777, a French merchant sent to purchase one hundred and fifty of them at Molembó, which cost him, one with another, 583 livres 18 sols 10 deniers, [about 24l. 6s. 5½d.] beside the expences of fitting out. At the same period he sent for 521 at Porto Novo, which he obtained for 460 livres 10 deniers [about 19l. 3s. 4½d.]

This difference in the price, which may be considered as habitual, is not to be attributed to the inferiority of the slaves from the north ; they are, on the contrary, stronger, more laborious, and more intelligent, than those from the south ; but the coast from which they are brought is less convenient, and more dangerous ; they are not always to be found there, and the privateer runs the risk of losing the profits of the voyage ; it is necessary to put in at Princes, and St. Thomas islands, in order to procure water for them ; besides, that several of them perish in the passage, which is delayed by contrary winds, calms, and currents ; and that their disposition inclines them to despair and to rebellion. All these reasons must render them cheaper in

Africa, though they be sold for something more in the New World.

Supposing that fourscore thousand blacks have been purchased in 1777, and all of them at the prices we have mentioned, the amount of the whole will be 41,759,333 livres 6 sols 8 deniers [about 1,739,970l. 4s. 5½d.] which the African coasts will have obtained for the most horrid of all sacrifices.

The slave merchant doth not receive this entire sum. Part of it is absorbed by the taxes required by the sovereigns of the ports in which the trade is carried on. An agent of the government, whose business it is to maintain order, hath likewise his demands. Intermediate persons are employed between the buyer and the seller, whose interposition is become dearer, in proportion to the increase of the competition between the European navigators, and to the diminution of the number of the blacks. These expences, foreign to the trade, are not exactly the same in all the markets; but they do not experience any important variations, and are too considerable everywhere.

These slaves are not paid for with metals, but with our productions, and with our merchandize. All nations, except the Portuguese, give nearly things of the same value. They consist of broad swords, firelocks, gunpowder, iron, brandy, toys, carpets, glass, woollen stuffs, and especially East-India linens, or such as are manufactured and printed in imitation of them in Europe. The people to the north of the line have adopted for their coin a small white shell, which we bring to them from the Maldives. The trade of the Europeans on the south of the line, hath not this object of exchange. The coin is represented there by a small piece of straw stuff, eighteen inches in length, and twelve in breadth, which is current for five sols [2½d.] of France.

THE European nations have thought *Who are the people*
that it would be of use to their trade *who purchase slaves.*
to have settlements in the western part
of Africa. The Portuguese, who, according to the generally-received opinion, arrived there the first, carried on the slave trade for a long while without any competitors, because they alone had established cultures in America. From

a concurrence of unfortunate circumstances, they were subdued by Spain, and attacked in every part of the world by the Dutch, who had disengaged themselves from the fetters under which they were oppressed. The new republicans triumphed, without any extraordinary exertions, over an enslaved people, and more especially on the coast of Guinea, where no means of defence had been prepared. But no sooner had the court of Lisbon recovered their independency, than they were desirous of reconquering those possessions, of which they had been deprived during their state of slavery. Their navigators were encouraged by their successes in the Brazils to sail towards Africa. Though they did not succeed in restoring to their country all its ancient rights, they recovered at least, in 1648, the country of Angola, which hath remained ever since under its dominion. A few islands, more or less considerable, in these immense seas, belong likewise to Portugal. Such are the remains of the empire which the court of Lisbon had established, and which extended from Ceuta to the Red sea.

The Dutch gave up their share of these rich spoils to the West-India company, who had seized upon them. This monopolizing company built forts, levied taxes, took upon themselves the settling of all disputes, ventured to punish any person with death whom they judged to act contrary to their interest; and even went so far as to consider as enemies all the European navigators whom they found in these latitudes, the exclusive trade of which they claimed to themselves. This conduct so totally ruined this chartered body, that, in 1730, they were obliged to give up the expeditions which they had hitherto carried on without competition. They only reserved to themselves the property of the forts, the defence and the maintenance of which costs them annually 280,000 florins, or 616,000 livres [25,666l. 13s. 4d.] They send a ship every year to victual these forts, unless they can prevail upon the merchantmen, who frequent those latitudes, to convey provision to them at a moderate freight. They sometimes even make use of the right they have reserved to themselves of sending twelve soldiers upon every ship, by paying seventy-nine livres four sols [3l. 6d.] for the passage, and for the subsistence of each.

The directors of the several factories are allowed to pur-

chase slaves, upon giving forty-four livres [1l. 16s. 8d.] a-head to the companies on which they depend ; but they are obliged to sell them in Africa itself, and are forbidden by the laws to send them on their own account to the New World.

These regions are open at present to all the subjects of the republic. Their obligations to the company consist only in paying 46 livres 14 sols [2l. 1cs. 7d.] to it, for every ton which is contained in the vessel, and three per cent. for all the provisions which they bring back from America to Europe.

In the first beginning of their liberty, the trade of gold, ivory, wax, red wood, and of that species of pepper known by the name of *malaguette*, employed several vessels. None are fitted out at present for these objects, portions of which are put upon the ships that are sent to purchase negroes.

The number of these vessels, which are mostly of two hundred tons burthen, and the crews of which consisted of twenty-eight, and as far as thirty-six men, formerly amounted annually to twenty-five or thirty, which traded for six or seven thousand slaves. This number is considerably diminished, since the lowering of the coffee hath disabled the colonies from paying for those cargoes. The province of Holland hath some share in this shameful traffic, but it is chiefly carried on by the province of Zealand.

The deplorable victims of this barbarous avidity are dispersed in the several settlements which the United provinces have formed in the islands, or on the American continent. They ought to be exposed to public view, and sold separately, but this rule is not always adhered to ; it even frequently happens, that a privateer, at the time of the sale, agrees for the price for which he will sell the slaves at the next voyage.

In 1552, the English flag appeared, for the first time, on the western coasts of Africa. The merchants who traded there formed an association thirty-eight years after, to which, according to the general custom of those times, an exclusive charter was granted. This society, and those that followed it, had their vessels often confiscated by the Portuguese, and afterwards by the Dutch, who pretended that they were the sovereigns of those countries ; but the peace

of Breda at length put a perpetual stop to these tyrannical persecutions.

The English islands in the New World began, at that time, to require a great number of slaves for the cultivation of their lands. This was an infallible source of prosperity for the companies whose business it was to furnish these planters; and yet these companies, which succeeded each other with great rapidity, were all ruined; and retarded, by their indolence, or by their dishonesty, the improvement of the colonies, from which the nation had expected to reap such considerable advantages.

Public indignation against such misconduct manifested itself, in 1697, in so violent a manner, as to compel government to allow individuals to frequent the western part of Africa, but upon condition that they should give ten per cent. to the monopoly for the maintenance of the forts built in those regions. The privilege itself was afterwards abolished. This trade hath been open since 1749 to all the English navigators without any expence, and the treasury hath taken upon itself the expences of sovereignty.

Since the peace of 1763, Great Britain hath sent annually to the coast of Guinea 195 vessels, consisting, collectively, of twenty-three thousand tons, and seven or eight thousand men. Rather more than half this number have been dispatched from Liverpool; and the remainder from London, Bristol, and Lancaster. They have traded for forty thousand slaves, the greatest part of which have been sold in the English West-India islands, and in North America. Those that were not disposed of in these markets, have been either fraudulently or publicly introduced in the colonies belonging to other nations.

This considerable trade hath not been conducted upon uniform principles. The part of the coast which begins at Cape Blanco, and ends at Cape Rouge, was put under the immediate inspection of the ministry in 1765. From that period to 1778, the civil and military expences of this settlement have amounted to 4,050,000 livres [168,750*l.*]: a sum which the nation have considered as inadequate to the advantages they have acquired from it.

A committee, chosen by the merchants themselves, and consisting of nine deputies, three from Liverpool, three from London, and three from Bristol, are to take care of

the settlements which are formed between Cape Rouge and the line. Though parliament have annually granted four or five hundred thousand livres [from 16,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* to 20,833*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*] for the maintenance of these small forts, most of them are in a ruinous condition; but they are protected by the difficulty of landing.

The English have no factory upon the remaining part of the west of Africa. Every trader resorts to them in the manner he thinks most suitable to his interest, without restraint, and without any particular protection. As the competition is greater in these ports than in the others, the navigators of the nation have gradually forsaken them, and they scarce deal annually for two thousand slaves, in markets where they formerly purchased twelve or fifteen thousand.

It can scarce be doubted that the French appeared on those savage coasts before their rivals; but they entirely lost sight of them till the year 1621, when their flag began again to appear there. The settlement which they formed at that period in Senegal, acquired, in 1678, some increase from the terror which the victorious arms of Lewis XIV had inspired. This rising power became the prey of a formidable enemy under the reign of his successor. Other factories, successively formed, and become useless in the hands of a monopoly, had already been forsaken. Accordingly, for want of settlements, the trade of that country hath always been insufficient for its rich colonies. In its greatest prosperity, it hath never furnished them more than thirteen or fourteen thousand slaves annually.

The Danes settled above a century ago in those countries. An exclusive company exercised its privileges there, with that degree of barbarity, of which the more polished countries of Europe have so often set the example in those unfortunate climates. Only one of its agents had the courage to forego these atrocious proceedings, which, from habit, they had considered as legal. Such was his reputation for his goodness, and such the confidence reposed in his integrity, that the negroes used to come from the distance of a hundred leagues to see him. The sovereign of a distant country sent his daughter to him with gold and slaves, to obtain a grandson of Schilderop's, which was the name of this European so much revered upon all the coasts of Ni-

gritia. O virtue! thou dost still exist in the hearts of those miserable people, who are condemned to live among tigers, or to groan under the tyranny of man! They are then capable of feeling the delightful attractions of benevolent humanity! Just and magnanimous Dane! What monarch ever received an homage so pure and so glorious as that which thy nation hath seen thee enjoy! And in what countries? On a sea, and on a land, which hath been contaminated for three centuries past with an infamous traffic, of crimes and misfortunes, of men exchanged for arms, of children sold by their fathers! We have not tears sufficient to deplore such horrors, and those tears would be unavailing!

In 1754, the trade of Guinea was opened to all citizens, upon condition of paying twelve livres [10s.] to the treasury for every negro which they should introduce into the Danish islands in the New World. This liberty did not extend, *communibus annis*, beyond the purchase of five hundred slaves. Such a degree of indolence determined government to listen, in 1765, to the proposals of a foreigner, who offered to give a proper degree of extension to this vile commerce, and the tax imposed upon it was taken off. This new experiment was entirely unsuccessful, because the author of the project was never able to collect more than 170,000 crowns [21,250l.] for the execution of his enterprises; and in 1776, the system which had been given up eleven years before, was reallumed.

Chrilliansburg and Fredericksburg are the only factories which are in some degree fortified; the others are only plain lodges. The crown maintains, in the five settlements, sixty-two men, some of whom are negroes, for the sum of 53,160 livres [2,215l.] If the magazines were properly supplied, it would be easy to treat every year for two thousand slaves: only two hundred are purchased in the present state of things, most of which are given up to foreign nations, because no Danish navigators appear to carry them off.

It cannot be easily foreseen what maxims Spain will adopt in the connections she is going to form in Africa. This crown hath successively received slaves, sometimes openly, and sometimes fraudulently, from the Genoese, from the Portuguese, from the French, and from the Eng-

lish. In order to emerge from this state of dependence, it hath caused to be ceded, by the treaties of 1777 and of 1778, by the court of Lisbon, the islands of Annabona, and of Fernando del Po, both situated very near the line, the one to the south, and the other to the north. The former hath only one very dangerous harbour, too little water to contain ships, and is six miles in circumference. The greatest part of this space is occupied by two high mountains. The thick clouds with which they are almost constantly covered, keep the valleys in that state of moisture which would render them susceptible of cultivation. A few hundred negroes are seen here, whose labours furnish a small number of white men with a great abundance of hogs, goats, and poultry. The sale of a small quantity of cotton supplies them with their other wants, which are inclosed in a very narrow compass. The second acquisition is of less intrinsic value, as it hath no kind of harbour, and as its inhabitants are very ferocious! but its proximity to Calbari and to Gabon, renders it more proper for the purpose which hath dictated the acquiring of it.

Let not, however, the Spanish ministry imagine, that it is sufficient to have some possessions in Guinea, in order to procure slaves. Such was, indeed, the origin of this infamous traffic. At that time, every European nation had only to fortify its factories, in order to drive away strangers, and to oblige the natives to sell to no other traders except their own. But when these small districts have had no more slaves to deliver, the trade hath languished, because the people of the inland countries have preferred the free ports, where they might choose their purchasers. The advantage of these establishments, formed at so much expence, was lost, when the object of their commerce was exhausted.

THE difficulty of procuring slaves naturally points out the necessity of employing small ships for carrying them off. At a time when a small territory, adjacent to the coast, furnished in a fortnight or three weeks a whole cargo, it was prudent to employ large vessels, because there was a possibility of understanding, looking af-

Methods made use of in the purchase, in the treatment, and in the sale, of slaves. Reflections upon this subject.

ter, and encouraging, the slaves, who all spoke the same language. At present, when each ship can scarce procure sixty or eighty slaves a month, brought from the distance of two or three hundred leagues, exhausted by the fatigues of a long journey, obliged to remain on-board the vessels they are embarked upon five or six months, in sight of their country, having all different idioms, uncertain of the destiny that awaits them, struck with the prepossession that the Europeans eat them and drink their blood; their extreme uneasiness alone destroys them, or occasions disorders which become contagious, by the impossibility of separating the sick from the healthy. A small ship destined to carry two or three hundred negroes, by means of the short stay it makes on the coast, avoids half the accidents and losses to which a ship, capable of holding five or six hundred slaves, is exposed.

There are other abuses, and those of the utmost consequence, to be reformed in this voyage, which is naturally unhealthy. Those who engage in it commonly fall into two great mistakes. Dupes to a mercenary disposition, the privateers pay more regard to the quantity of stowage, than to the dispatch of their vessels; a circumstance that necessarily prolongs the voyage, which every thing should induce them to shorten. Another inconvenience still more dangerous is, the custom they have of sailing from Europe at all times; though the regularity of the winds and the currents hath determined the most proper season for arriving in these latitudes.

This bad practice hath given rise to the distinction of the great and little voyage. The little voyage is the straightest and the shortest. It is no more than eighteen hundred leagues to the most distant ports where there are slaves. It may be performed in thirty-five or forty days, from the beginning of September to the end of November; because, from the time of setting out to the time of arrival, the winds and the currents are favourable. It is even possible to attempt it in December, January, and February, but with less security and success.

Sailing is no longer practicable in these latitudes, from the beginning of March to the end of August. The ships would have continually to struggle against the violent currents which run northward, and against the south-east

wind, which constantly blows. Experience hath taught navigators, that, during this season, they must keep at a distance from the shore, get into the open sea, sail towards the south as far as twenty-six or twenty-eight degrees betwixt Africa and Brazil, and afterwards draw gradually nearer and nearer to Guinea, in order to land at a hundred and fifty or two hundred leagues to windward of the port where they are to disembark. This route is two thousand five hundred leagues, and requires ninety or a hundred days sail.

This great route, independent of its length, deprives them of the most favourable time for trade, and for returning. The ships meet with calms, are thwarted by winds, and carried away by currents; water fails them, the provisions are spoiled, and the slaves are seized with the scurvy. Other calamities, not less fatal, often increase the danger of this situation. The negroes to the north of the line are subject to the small-pox, which, by a singularity very distressing, seldom breaks out among this people till after the age of fourteen. If this contagious distemper should affect a ship which is at her moorings, there are several known methods to lessen its violence. But a ship attacked by it, while on its passage to America, often loses the whole cargo of slaves. Those who are born to the south of the line escape this disease by another, which is a kind of virulent ulcer, the malignity of which is more violent and more irritable on the sea, and which is never radically cured. Physicians ought, perhaps, to observe this double effect of the small-pox among the negroes, which is, that it favours those who are born beyond the equator, and never attacks the others in their infancy. The number and variety of effects sometimes afford occasion for the investigation of the causes of disorders, and for the discovery of remedies proper for them.

Though all the nations concerned in the African trade be equally interested in preserving the slaves in their passage, they do not all attend to this with the same care. They all feed them with beans mixed with a small quantity of rice; but they differ in other respects in their manner of treating them. The English, Dutch, and Danes, keep the men constantly in irons, and frequently hand-cuff the women: the small number of hands they have on-board.

their ships obliges them to this severity. The French, who have great numbers, allow them more liberty; three or four days after their departure they take off all their fetters. All these nations, especially the English, are too negligent with regard to the intercourse between the sailors with the women slaves. This irregularity occasions the death of three fourths of those whom the Guinea voyage destroys every year. None but the Portuguese, during their passage, are secured against revolts and other calamities. This advantage is a consequence of the care they take to man their vessels only with the negroes to whom they have given their freedom. The slaves, encouraged by the conversation and condition of their countrymen, form a tolerably favourable idea of the destiny that awaits them. The quietness of their behaviour induces the Portuguese to grant the two sexes the happiness of living together; an indulgence which, if allowed in other vessels, would be productive of the greatest inconveniences.

The sale of slaves is not carried on in the same manner throughout all America. The English, who have promiscuously bought up whatever presented itself in the general market, sell their cargo by wholesale. A single merchant buys it entire; and the planters parcel it out. What they reject is sent into foreign colonies, either by smuggling, or with permission. The cheapness of a negro is a greater object to the buyer to induce him to purchase, than the badness of his constitution is to deter him from it. These traders will one day be convinced of the absurdity of such a conduct.

The Portuguese, Dutch, French, and Danes, who have no way of disposing of the infirm and weakly slaves, never take charge of any of them in Guinea. They all divide their cargoes, according to the demands of the proprietors of plantations. The bargain is made for ready money, or for credit, according as circumstances vary.

Wretched condition of the slaves in America. IN America it is generally believed and asserted, that the Africans are equally incapable of reason and of virtue. The following well-authenticated fact will enable us to judge of this opinion.

An English ship that traded in Guinea in 1752, was

obliged to leave the surgeon behind, whose bad state of health did not permit him to continue at sea. Murray, for that was his name, was there, endeavouring to recover his health, when a Dutch vessel drew near the coast, put the blacks in irons whom curiosity had brought to the shore, and instantly sailed off with the booty.

Those who interested themselves for these unhappy people, incensed at so base a treachery, instantly ran to Cudjoc, who stopped them at his door, and asked them what they were in search of? "The white man who is with you," replied they, "who should be put to death, because his brethren have carried off ours. The Europeans," answered the generous host, "who have carried off our countrymen, are barbarians; kill them whenever you can find them. But he who lodges with me is a good man, he is my friend; my house is his fortress; I am his soldier, and I will defend him. Before you can get at him, you shall pass over me. O my friends, what just man would ever enter my doors, if I had suffered my habitation to be stained with the blood of an innocent man?" This discourse appeased the rage of the blacks: they retired, ashamed of the design that had brought them there; and some days after acknowledged to Murray himself, how happy they were that they had not committed a crime that would have occasioned them perpetual remorse.

This event renders it probable, that the first impressions which the Africans receive in the New World, determine them either to good or bad actions. Repeated experience confirms the truth of this observation: those who fall to the share of a humane master willingly espouse his interests. They insensibly adopt the spirit and manners of the place where they are fixed. This attachment is sometimes exalted even into heroism. A Portuguese slave who had fled into the woods, having learnt that his old master had been taken up for an assassination, came into the court of justice, and acknowledged himself guilty of the fact, let himself be put in prison in lieu of his master; brought false, though judicial proofs, of his pretended crime, and suffered death instead of the guilty person. Actions of so sublime a nature must be uncommon. We will mention

one, which, though less heroic, is nevertheless very praiseworthy.

A planter of St. Domingo had a confidential slave, whom he was perpetually flattering with the hope of speedy freedom, which, however, he never granted him. The more pains this kind of favourite took to render himself useful, the more firmly rivetted were his fetters, because he became more and more necessary. Hope, however, did not forsake him, but he resolved to attain the desired end by a different mode.

In some parts of the island, the negroes are obliged to provide themselves with clothes and nourishment; and for this purpose they are allowed a small portion of territory, and two hours every day to cultivate it. Those among them who are active and intelligent, do not merely gain their subsistence from these little plantations, but they likewise acquire a superfluity, which insures a fortune to them more or less considerable.

Lewis Desfrouleaux, whose schemes rendered him very economical and very laborious, had soon amassed funds more than sufficient to purchase his liberty. He offered them with transport for the purchase of his independence, which had been so often promised him. "I have too long traded with the blood of my fellow creatures," said his master to him in a tone of humiliation; "be free, you restore me to myself." Immediately the master, whose heart had been rather led astray, than corrupted, sold all his effects, and embarked for France.

He was obliged to go through Paris, in order to reach his province. His intention was to make but a short stay in that metropolis; but the various pleasures he met with in that superb and delightful capital, detained him till he had foolishly dissipated the riches which he had acquired by long and fortunate labours. In his despair he thought it less humiliating to solicit, in America, assistance from those who were obliged to him for their advancement, than to ask it in Europe of those who had ruined him.

His arrival at Cape François caused a general surprise. No sooner was his situation known, than he was generally forsaken; all doors were shut against him, no heart was moved by compassion. He found himself reduced to the necessity of passing the remainder of his days in that retire-

ment and obscurity which is the consequence of indigence, and especially when merited, when Lewis Desfrouleaux came to throw himself at his feet. "Condescend," said that virtuous freeman, "condescend to accept the house of your slave; you shall be served, obeyed, and beloved in it." But soon perceiving that the respect which is owing to the unfortunate, and the attention which is due to benefactors, did not render his old master happy, he pressed him to retire to France. "My gratitude will follow you," said he, embracing his knees. "Here is a contract for an annual income of 1500 livres [62l.] which I conjure you to accept. This fresh instance of your goodness will be the comfort of my future days."

The annuity hath always been paid beforehand since that period. Some presents, as tokens of friendship, constantly accompanied it from St. Domingo to France. The giver, and the receiver, were both alive in 1774. May they both serve for a long time as a model to this proud, ungrateful, and unnatural age!

Several acts resembling this of Lewis Desfrouleaux, have affected some of the planters. Several of them would readily say, as Sir William Gooch, governor of Virginia, when he was blamed for returning the salutation of a negro, *I should be very sorry that a slave should be more mannerly than myself.*

But there are barbarians, who considering pity as a weakness, delight in making their dependents perpetually sensible of their tyranny. They justly, however, receive their punishment in the negligence, infidelity, desertion, and suicide of the deplorable victims of their insatiable avarice. Some of these unfortunate men, especially those of Mina, courageously put an end to their lives, under the firm persuasion that they shall, immediately after death, rise again in their own country, which they look upon as the finest in the world. A vindictive spirit furnishes others with resources still more fatal. Instructed from their infancy in the arts of poisons, which grow, as it were, under their hands, they employ them in the destruction of the cattle, the horses, the mules, the companions of their slavery, and of every living thing employed in the cultivation of the lands of their oppressors. In order to remove from themselves all suspicion, they first exercise their cruelties on their wives,

their children, their mistresses, and on every thing that is dearest to them. In this dreadful project, that can only be the result of despair, they have the double pleasure of delivering their species from a yoke more dreadful than death, and of leaving their tyrant in a wretched state of misery, that is an image of their own condition. The fear of punishment doth not check them. They are scarce ever known to have any kind of foresight; and they are, moreover, certain of concealing their crimes, being proof against tortures. By one of those inexplicable contradictions of the human heart, though common to all people, whether civilized or not, negroes, though naturally cowards, give many instances of an unshaken firmness of soul. The same organization which subjects them to servitude, from the indolence of their mind, and the relaxation of their fibres, inspires them with vigour and unparalleled resolution for extraordinary actions. They are cowards all their lifetime, and heroes only for an instant. One of these miserable men hath been known to cut his wrist off with a stroke of a hatchet, rather than purchase his liberty by submitting to the vile office of an executioner. Another slave had been slightly tortured for a trifling fault, which he was not even guilty of. Stung by resentment, he determined to seize upon the whole family of his oppressor, and to carry them up to the roof of the house. When the tyrant was preparing to enter his dwelling, he beheld his youngest son thrown down at his feet; he lifted up his head and saw the second fall likewise. Seized with despair, he fell on his knees, to implore, in great agitation, the life of the third. But the fall of this last of his offspring, together with that of the negro, convinced him that he was no longer a father, nor worthy to be one.

Nothing, however, is more miserable than the condition of the negro, throughout the whole American archipelago. The first thing done, is to disgrace him with the indelible mark of slavery, by stamping with a hot iron, upon his arms, or upon his breast, the name or the mark of his oppressor. A narrow unwholesome hut, without any conveniences, serves him for a dwelling. His bed is a hurdle, fitter to put the body to torture than to afford it any ease. Some earthen pots, and a few wooden dishes, are his furniture. The coarse linen which covers part of his body,

neither secures him from the insupportable heats of the day, nor the dangerous dews of the night. The food he is supplied with, is cassava, salt beef, salt cod, fruits, and roots, which are scarce able to support his miserable existence. Deprived of every enjoyment, he is condemned to a perpetual drudgery in a burning climate, constantly under the rod of an unfeeling master.

All Europe hath, for this century past, been filled with the most sublime and the soundest sentiments of morality. Writings, which will be immortal, have established in the most affecting manner, that all men are brethren. We are filled with indignation at the cruelties, either civil or religious, of our ferocious ancestors, and we turn away our eyes from those ages of horror and blood. Those among our neighbours, whom the inhabitants of Barbary have loaden with irons, obtain our pity and assistance. Even imaginary distresses draw tears from our eyes, both in the silent retirement of the closet, and especially at the theatre. It is only the fatal destiny of the negroes which doth not concern us. They are tyrannized, mutilated, burnt, and put to death, and yet we listen to these accounts coolly and without emotion. The torments of a people to whom we owe our luxuries, can never reach our hearts.

The condition of these slaves, though everywhere deplorable, is something different in the colonies. In those where there are very extensive territories, a portion of land is generally given them, to supply them with the necessaries of life. They are allowed to employ a part of the Sunday in cultivating it, and the few moments that on other days they spare from the time allotted for their meals. In the more confined islands, the colonist himself furnishes their food, the greatest part of which hath been imported by sea from other countries. Ignorance, avarice, or poverty, have introduced into some colonies a method of providing for the subsistence of negroes, equally destructive both to the men and the plantation. They are allowed on Saturday, or some other day, to work in the neighbouring plantations, or to plunder them, in order to procure a maintenance for the rest of the week.

Beside these differences, arising from the particular situation of the settlements in the American islands, each European nation hath a manner of treating slaves peculiar to it-

self. The Spaniards make them the companions of their indolence; the Portuguese, the instruments of their debauchery; the Dutch, the victims of their avarice. By the English, they are considered merely as natural productions, which ought neither to be used nor destroyed without necessity; but they never treat them with familiarity; they never smile upon them, nor speak to them. One would think they were afraid of letting them suspect, that nature could have given any one mark of resemblance betwixt them and their slaves. This makes them hate the English. The French, less haughty, less disdainful, consider the Africans as a species of moral beings; and these unhappy men, sensible of the honour of seeing themselves almost treated like rational creatures, seem to forget that their master is impatient of making his fortune, that he always exacts labours from them above their strength, and frequently lets them want subsistence.

The opinions of the Europeans have also some influence on the condition of the negroes of America. The protestants, who are not actuated by a desire of making profelytes, suffer them to live in mohammedism, or in that idolatry in which they were born, under a pretence, that it would be injurious to keep their *brethren in Christ* in a state of slavery. The catholics think themselves obliged to give them some instruction, and to baptise them; but their charity extends no farther than the bare ceremonies of a baptism, which is wholly useless and unnecessary to men who dread not the pains of hell, to which, they say, they are accustomed in this life.

The torments they experience in their slavery, and the disorders to which they are liable in America, both contribute to render them insensible to the dread of future punishment. They are particularly subject to two diseases, the yaws, and a complaint that affects their stomach. The first effect of this last disorder is, to turn their skin and complexion to an olive colour. Their tongue becomes white, and they are overpowered by such a desire of sleeping that they cannot resist; they grow faint, and are incapable of the least exercise. It is a languor, and a general relaxation of the whole machine. In this situation they are in such a state of despondency, that they suffer themselves to be knocked down rather than walk. The loathing which

they have of mild and wholesome food, is attended with a kind of rage for every thing that is salted or spiced. Their legs swell, their breath is obstructed, and few of them survive this disorder. The greatest part die of suffocation, after having suffered and languished for several months.

The thickness of their blood, which appears to be the source of these disorders, may proceed from several causes. One of the principal is, undoubtedly, the melancholy which must seize these men who are violently torn away from their country, are fettered like criminals, who find themselves all on a sudden on the sea, where they continue for two months or six weeks, and who, from the midst of a beloved family, pass under the yoke of an unknown people, from whom they expect the most dreadful punishments. A species of food, new to them, and disagreeable in itself, disgusts them in their passage. At their arrival in the islands, the provisions that are distributed to them, are neither good in quality, nor sufficient to support them. The cassava, which is particularly allotted to them, is very dangerous in itself. The animals who eat of it are rapidly destroyed, though, by a contradiction which is often found in nature, they are very fond of it. If this root doth not produce such fatal effects among mankind, it is because they do not make use of it till all its poison hath been extracted by preparation. But with what negligence must not these preparations be made, when slaves only are the object of them?

Art hath for a long time been employed in endeavouring to find out some remedy against this disorder in the stomach. It has been found, after several experiments, that nothing was more salutary than to give the blacks who were attacked with it three ounces of the juice of a species of colocynth, with almost a similar dose of a kind of oracte, known in the islands by the name of *jargon*. This drink is preceded by a purgative, which consists of half a drachm of gumbooge, diluted in milk, or in honey-water.

The yaws, which is the second disorder peculiar to negroes, and which accompanies them from Africa to America, is contracted in the birth, or by communication between the sexes. No age is free from it; but it more particularly attacks at the periods of infancy and youth. Old people have seldom strength sufficient to support the long and violent treatment which it requires.

There are said to be four species of yaws. The yaws with pustules, large and small, as in the small-pox; that which resembles lentils; and lastly the red yaws, which is the most dangerous of all.

The yaws attack every part of the body, but more especially the face. It manifests itself by granulated red spots, resembling a raspberry. These spots degenerate into sordid ulcers, and the disorder at length affects the bones. It is not in general attended with much sensibility.

Fevers seldom attack the persons who are afflicted with the yaws; they eat and drink as usual, but they have an almost insuperable aversion for every kind of motion, without which, however, no cure can be expected.

The eruption lasts about three months; the patients are fed, during this long space of time, with the catalou, or *retmia Brasiliensis*, with rice dressed without either grease or butter, and the only drink which is allowed them is water, in which one or other of these vegetables hath been boiled. They must also be kept very warm, and made to use every sort of exercise that can most powerfully promote perspiration.

At length the period comes, when it is necessary to purge and bathe the patient, and to administer mercury to him, both internally and by friction, in such a manner as to bring on a gentle salivation. The effect of this remedy, which is the only specific against the disease, is to be assisted by a diet drink made with herbs, or with the sudorific woods. This process must even be continued for a long time after the cure is considered as complete.

The ulcer, which hath served as a drain during the treatment, is not always closed at the termination even of the disorder. It is then cured with red precipitate, and a digestive ointment.

The negroes have a peculiar method of drying up their pustules; they apply to them the black of the saucapans, mixed with the juice of the lemon or citron.

All the negroes, as well male as female, who come from Guinea, or are born in the islands, have the yaws once in their lives: it is a disease they must necessarily pass through; but there is no instance of any of them being attacked with it a second time, after having been radically cured. The Europeans seldom or never catch this disorder, notwith-

standing the frequent and daily connection which they have with the negro women. These women suckle the children of the white people, but do not give them the yaws. How is it possible to reconcile these facts, which are incontestible, with the system which physicians seem to have adopted with regard to the nature of the yaws? Can it not be allowed, that the semen, the blood, and skin of the negroes, are susceptible of a virus peculiar to their species? The cause of this disorder, perhaps, is the same as that which occasions their colour: one difference is naturally productive of another: and there is no being or quality that exists absolutely detached from others in nature.

But whatever this disorder may be, it is demonstrated, that fourteen or fifteen hundred thousand blacks, who are now dispersed over the European colonies of the New World, are the unfortunate remains of eight or nine millions of slaves that have been conveyed there. This dreadful destruction cannot be the effect of the climate, which is nearly the same as that of Africa, much less of the disorders, to which, in the opinion of all observers, but few fall a sacrifice. It must therefore originate from the manner in which these slaves are governed: and might not an error of this nature be corrected?

THE first step necessary in this reformation would be, to attend minutely to the natural and moral state of man. Those who go to purchase blacks on the coasts of savage nations; those who convey them to America, and especially those who direct their labours, often think themselves obliged, from their situation, and frequently too for the sake of their own safety, to oppress these wretched men. The heart of those who conduct the slaves is lost to all sense of compassion, is ignorant of every motive to enforce obedience, except those of fear or severity, and these are exercised with all the ferocious spirit of a temporary authority. If the proprietors of plantations would cease to regard the care of their slaves as an occupation below them, and consider it as an office to which it is their duty to attend, they would soon discard these errors that arise from a spirit of cruelty. The history of all mankind would shew them, that, in order to render

In what manner the condition of slaves might be rendered more supportable.

slavery useful, it is at least necessary to make it easy; that force doth not prevent the rebellion of the mind; that it is the master's interest that the slave should be attached to life, and that nothing is to be expected from him the moment that he no longer fears to die.

This principle of enlightened reason, derived from the sentiments of humanity, would contribute to the reformation of several abuses. Men would acknowledge the necessity of lodging, clothing, and giving proper food to beings condemned to the most painful bondage that hath ever existed since the infamous origin of slavery. They would be sensible, that it is naturally impossible that those who reap no advantage from their own labours, can have the same understanding, the same economy, the same activity, the same strength, as the man who enjoys the produce of his industry. That political moderation would gradually take place, which consists in lessening labour, alleviating punishment, and rendering to man part of his rights, in order to reap, with greater certainty, the benefit of those duties that are imposed upon him. The preservation of a great number of slaves, whom disorders, occasioned by vexation or regret, deprive the colonies of, would be the natural consequence of so wise a regulation. Far from aggravating the yoke that oppresses them, every kind of attention should be given to make it easy, and to dissipate even the idea of it, by favouring a natural propensity that seems peculiar to the negroes.

Their organs are extremely sensible of the powers of music. Their ear is so true, that in their dances, the time of a song makes them spring up a hundred at once, striking the earth at the same instant. Enchanted, as it were, with the voice of a singer, or the tone of a stringed instrument, a vibration of the air is the spirit that actuates all the bodies of these men: a sound agitates, transports, and throws them into ecstasies. In their common labours, the motion of their arms, or of their feet, is always in cadence. At all their employments they sing, and seem always as if they were dancing. Music animates their courage, and rouses them from their indolence. The marks of this extreme sensibility to harmony are visible in all the muscles of their bodies, which are always naked. Poets and musicians by nature, they make the words subservient to the music, by a licence

they arbitrarily assume of lengthening or shortening them, in order to accommodate them to any air that pleases them. Whenever any object or incident strikes a negro, he instantly makes it the subject of a song. In all ages this hath been the origin of poetry. Three or four words, which are alternately repeated by the singer and the general chorus, sometimes constitute the whole poem. Five or six bars of music compose the whole length of the song. A circumstance that appears singular is, that the same air, though merely a continual repetition of the same tones, takes entire possession of them, makes them work or dance for several hours: neither they, nor even the white men, are disgusted with that tedious uniformity which these repetitions might naturally occasion. This particular attachment is owing to the warmth and expression which they introduce into their songs. Their airs are generally double time. None of them tend to inspire them with pride. Those intended to excite tenderness promote rather a kind of languor. Even those which are most lively carry in them a certain expression of melancholy. This is the highest entertainment to minds of great sensibility.

So strong an inclination for music might become a powerful motive of action under the direction of skilful hands. Festivals, games, and rewards, might on this account be established among them. These amusements, conducted with judgment, would prevent that stupidity so common among slaves, ease their labours, and preserve them from that constant melancholy which consumes them, and shortens their days. After having provided for the preservation of the blacks exported from Africa, the welfare of those who were born in the islands themselves would then be considered.

The negroes are not averse from the propagation of their species, even in the chains of slavery. But it is the cruelty of the masters which hath effectually prevented them from complying with this great end of nature. Such hard labour is required from negro women, both before and after their pregnancy, that their children are either abortive, or live but a short time after delivery. Mothers, rendered desperate by the punishments which the weakness of their condition occasions them, sometimes snatch their children from the cradle, in order to strangle them in their arms, and sa-

crifice them with a fury mingled with a spirit of revenge and compassion, that they may not become the property of their cruel masters. This barbarity, the horror of which must be wholly imputed to the Europeans, will perhaps convince them of their error. Their sensibility will be roused, and engage them to pay a greater attention to their true interests. They will find, that by committing such outrages against humanity, they injure themselves; and if they do not become the benefactors of their slaves, they will at least cease to be their executioners.

They will, perhaps, resolve to set free those mothers who shall have brought up a considerable number of children to the age of six years. The allurements of liberty are the most powerful that can influence the human heart. The negro women, animated by the hope of so great a blessing, to which all would aspire, and few would be able to obtain, would make neglect and infamy be succeeded by a virtuous emulation to bring up children, whose number and preservation would secure to them freedom and tranquillity.

After having taken wise measures not to deprive their plantations of those succours arising from the extraordinary fruitfulness of the negro women, they will attend to the care of conducting and extending cultivation by means of population, and without foreign expedients. Every thing invites them to establish this easy and natural system.

There are some powers, whose settlements in the American isles every day acquire extent, and there are none whose manual labour doth not continually increase. These lands, therefore, constantly require a greater number of hands to clear them. Africa, where all Europeans go to recruit the population of the colonies, gradually furnishes them with fewer men, and supplies them at the same time with worse slaves, and at a higher price. This source for the obtaining slaves will be gradually more and more exhausted. But were this change in trade as chimerical, as it seems to be not far distant, it is nevertheless certain, that a great number of slaves, drawn out of a remote region, perish in their passage, or in the New World; and that when they come to America they are sold at a very advanced price; that there are few of them whose natural term of life is not shortened; and that the greater part of those

who attain a wretched old age, are extremely ignorant, and being accustomed from their infancy to idleness, are frequently very unfit for the employments to which they are destined, and are in a continual state of despondency, on account of their being separated from their country. If we do not mistake in our opinion, cultivators born in the American islands themselves, always breathing their native air, brought up without any other expence than what consists in a cheap food, habituated in early life to labour by their own parents, endowed with a sufficient share of understanding, or a singular aptitude for all the useful arts; such cultivators cannot but be preferable to slaves that have been sold, and live in a state of perpetual exile and restraint.

The method of substituting in the place of foreign negroes, those of the colonies themselves, is very obvious. It wholly consists in superintending the black children that are born in the islands, in confining to their workhouses that multitude of slaves who carry about with them their worthlessness, their licentiousness, and their luxury and insolence of their masters, in all the towns and ports of Europe; but above all, in requiring of navigators who frequent the African coasts, that they should form their cargo of an equal number of men and women, or even of a majority of women, during some years, in order to reduce that disproportion which prevails between the two sexes.

This last precaution, by putting the pleasures of love within the reach of all the blacks, would contribute to their ease and multiplication. These unhappy men, forgetting the weight of their chains, would with transport see themselves live again in their children. The majority of them are faithful, even to death, to those negro women whom love and slavery hath assigned to them for their companions; they treat them with that compassion which the wretched mutually derive from one another, even in the rigour of their condition; they comfort them under the load of their employments; they sympathize, at least, with them, when, through excess of labour, or want of food, the mother can only offer her child a breast that is dry, or bathed in her tears. The women, on their part, though tied down to no restrictions of chastity, are fixed in their attachments; provided that the vanity of being

beloved by white people does not render them inconstant. Unhappily this is a temptation to infidelity ; to which they have too often opportunities to yield.

Those who have inquired into the causes of this taste for black women, which appears to be so depraved in the Europeans, have found it to arise from the nature of the climate, which, under the torrid zone, irresistibly excites men to the pleasures of love ; the facility of gratifying this insurmountable inclination without restraint, and without the trouble of a long pursuit ; from a certain captivating attraction of beauty, discoverable in black women, as soon as custom hath once reconciled the eye to their colour ; but principally from a warmth of constitution, which gives them the power of inspiring and returning the most ardent transports. Thus they revenge themselves, as it were, for the humiliating despondency of their condition, by the violent and inordinate passion which they excite in their masters ; nor do our ladies in Europe possess, in a more exalted degree, the art of wasting and running out large fortunes than the negro women. But those of Africa have the superiority over those of Europe, in the real passion they have for the men who purchase them. The happy discovery and prevention of conspiracies that would have destroyed all their oppressors by the hands of their slaves, hath been often owing to the faithful attachment of these negro women. The double tyranny of these unworthy usurpers of the estates and liberty of such a number of people, deserved, doubtless, such a punishment.

Origin and progress of slavery.

WE will not here so far debase ourselves as to enlarge the ignominious list of those writers who devote their abilities, to justify by policy what is reprobated by morality. In an age where so many errors are boldly exposed, it would be unpardonable to conceal any truth that is interesting to humanity. If whatever we have hitherto advanced hath seemingly tended only to alleviate the burden of slavery, the reason is, that it was first necessary to give some comfort to those unhappy beings, whom we cannot set free ; and convince their oppressors that they are cruel to the prejudice of their real interests. But, in the meantime, until some considerable revolution shall make the evidence of this great

truth felt, it may not be improper to pursue this subject further. We shall then first prove, that there is no reason of state that can authorize slavery. We shall not be afraid to cite to the tribunal of reason and justice those governments which tolerate this cruelty, or which even are not ashamed to make it the basis of their power.

Slavery is a state in which a man hath lost, either by force or by convention, the property of his own person, and of whom a master can dispose as of his own effects.

This odious state was unknown in the first ages. Men were all equals; but that natural equality did not last long. As there was not yet any regular form of government established to maintain social order; as none of the lucrative professions existed, which the progress of civilization hath since introduced among the nations, the strongest, or the most artful, soon seized upon the best territories; and the weakest, and less cunning, were obliged to submit to those who were able to feed and to defend them. This state of dependence was tolerable. In the simplicity of ancient manners, there was no great difference between a master and his servants. Their dress, their food, their lodging, were almost alike. If, at any time, the superior, impetuous, and violent, as savages generally are, gave way to the ferociousness of his character, this was a transitory act, which made no alteration in the habitual state of things. But this arrangement did not long subsist. Those who commanded, readily accustomed themselves to believe that they were of a superior nature to those who obeyed. They kept them at a distance, and debased them. This contempt was attended with fatal consequences; the idea of considering these unfortunate people as slaves, grew familiar; and they became really so. Each master disposed of them in the manner which was the most favourable to his interest and to his passions. A master who had no further use for their labour, sold or exchanged them: and he who was desirous of increasing the number of them, encouraged them to multiply.

When societies, become more strong and more numerous, acquired a knowledge of the arts and of commerce; the weak found a support in the magistrate, and the poor found resources in the several branches of industry. They both emerged, by degrees, from the kind of necessity they had

experienced of submitting to slavery, in order to procure subsistence. The custom of putting one's self in the power of another, became every day less frequent, and liberty was at length considered as a precious and unalienable property.

In the meanwhile, the laws, which were imperfect and ferocious, still continued, for some time, to impose the penalty of servitude. As in the times of profound ignorance, the satisfaction of the offended person was the only aim which an ill-contrived authority proposed, those who had infringed the principles of justice, with regard to the person who accused them, were given up to him. The tribunals were afterwards determined by more extensive and more useful views. Every crime appeared to them, and with reason, an offence against society; and the criminal became the slave of the state, which disposed of him in the manner most advantageous for the public good. At that period there were no other captives, except those acquired in war.

Before a power was established to maintain order, the contests between individuals were very frequent, and the conqueror never failed to reduce the vanquished to a state of servitude. This custom continued for a long time, in the disputes between nations, because, as each combatant took the field at his own expence, he remained master of the prisoners he had taken himself, or of those which, in the division of the spoil, were given to him as a reward for his actions. But when the armies became mercenary, the government, who were at the expence of the war, and who ran the risk of the event, appropriated to themselves the spoils of the enemy, of which the prisoners were always the most important part. It was then necessary to purchase slaves from the state, or from the neighbouring savage nations. Such was the practice of the Greeks and of the Romans, and of all people who chose to increase their enjoyments by this inhuman and barbarous custom.

Europe relapsed again into the chaos of the primary ages, when the people of the north subverted the colossal empire, which had been raised, with so much glory, by a warlike and politic republic. These barbarians, who had slaves in the midst of their forests, multiplied them prodigiously in the provinces which they invaded. Not only those who were taken in arms were reduced to servitude,

this humiliating state became also the portion of citizens, who cultivated quietly at home the arts which flourish in times of peace. However, the number of freemen was more considerable in the subdued countries, during the time that the conquerors remained faithful to the form of government which they had thought proper to establish, in order to contain their new subjects, and to protect them from foreign invasions. But, no sooner had this singular institution, which collected a nation, commonly dispersed, into a constantly standing army, lost its influence; no sooner had the fortunate affinities which united the meanest soldier of this powerful body to their king, or to their general, ceased to exist, than a system of universal oppression was established. There was no longer any remarkable distinction between those who had preserved their independence, and those who had for a long time groaned under the yoke of slavery.

The men who were free, whether they were inhabitants of the towns or of the country, resided upon the king's domains, or upon the territories of some baron. All those who were in possession of fiefs, pretended, in those times of anarchy, that a man who enjoyed no distinction from birth, whoever he might be, could only possess a precarious kind of property, which had originally proceeded from their liberality. This prejudice, perhaps the most extravagant that hath ever afflicted the human species, persuaded the nobles that they could never be guilty of injustice, whatever were the obligations they might impose upon so base an order of beings.

According to these principles, they were not allowed to absent themselves, without leave, from their native country. They were not allowed to dispose of their property, either by will or by any other act made in their lifetime; and their lord was their undoubted heir, when they died without leaving any posterity, or when this posterity were fixed in another part of the country. They were not allowed to appoint guardians to their children; and the liberty of marrying was granted to those only who had purchased it. So much was it apprehended that the people should acquire an insight on their rights and interests, that the liberty of learning to read was one of the favours granted with the most reluctance. They were compelled to the

most humiliating vassalages. The taxes which were imposed upon them were arbitrary, unjust, oppressive, and destructive of the spirit of activity and industry. They were obliged to bear the tyrant's expences when he arrived ; their provisions, their furniture, their flocks, were all abandoned to pillage. If a law-suit was begun, it was not possible to end it in an amicable manner, because this method would have deprived the lord of the rights that would accrue to him from the sentence. Every kind of exchange between individuals was prohibited, at the period when the lord of the manor chose himself to sell the provisions which they had collected, or which they had even purchased. Such was the state of oppression under which the class of people groaned who were the least ill treated. If any of the vexations we have just given an account of, were unknown in certain places, others were substituted to them which were often more intolerable.

Some towns in Italy, which by fortunate chance had acquired the possession of some branches of commerce, were the first to be ashamed of such a situation ; and their riches furnished them with the means of shaking off the yoke of their feeble despots. Others purchased their liberty of the emperors, who, in the course of the bloody and lasting disputes which they had with the popes, and with their vassals, thought themselves exceedingly fortunate to sell privileges, which the state of their affairs did not permit them to refuse. Some princes were even prudent enough to sacrifice that part of their authority, which the ferment excited in men's minds made them foresee that they should soon be deprived of. Several of these towns remained insulated : but the majority united their interests. All of them formed political societies, governed by laws which had been dictated by the citizens themselves.

The success with which this revolution in government was attended, surprised the neighbouring nations. In the meanwhile, as the kings and barons who oppressed them, were not compelled by circumstances to give up their sovereignty, they contented themselves with granting to the towns in their dependence valuable and considerable immunities. They were authorized to surround themselves with walls, to bear arms, and to pay no more than a regular and moderate tribute. Liberty was so essential a point of their constitution, that whenever a bondsman took refuge among

them, he became a citizen, if he was not claimed during the course of the year. These communities, or municipal bodies, prospered in proportion to their position, their population, and their industry.

While the condition of men, reputed free, was so fortunately improved, that of the slaves remained the same; that is to say, the most deplorable which it is possible to conceive. These wretched people belonged so entirely to their masters, that they sold or exchanged them at pleasure. They were not allowed any kind of property, even out of their savings, whenever a fixed sum was assigned them for their subsistence. They were put to the torture for the smallest misdemeanour. They might be punished with death, without the interference of the magistrate. Marriage was for a long time forbidden to them; the connections between the two sexes were illegal; they were tolerated, and even encouraged, but they were not honoured with the nuptial benediction. The condition of the children was the same as that of their fathers; they were born, they lived, and they died in slavery. In most of the courts of judicature, their testimony was not admitted against a free man. They were obliged to wear a particular dress; and this humiliating distinction recalled every moment to their minds the ignominy of their existence. To complete these misfortunes, the spirit of the feudal system opposed the disfranchisement of this species of men. A generous master might indeed break the bonds of his domestic slaves whenever he chose; but innumerable formalities were required to change the situation of the slaves which belonged to the glebe. According to a maxim generally received, a vassal could not diminish the value of the fief which he had received; and the releasing of any of its cultivators was diminishing it. This obstacle must necessarily have retarded, but could not entirely prevent, the revolution, and for the following reason:

The Germans, and the other conquerors, had appropriated immense domains to themselves at the time of their invasion. The nature of these estates did not allow them to be dismembered. From that time it became impossible for the proprietor to retain all his slaves under his own inspection, and he was compelled to disperse them over the soil they were to cultivate. Their distance preventing their be-

ing overlooked, it was thought proper to encourage them by rewards proportioned to their labour. Thus gratifications, which most commonly consisted of a greater or less considerable part of the produce of the lands, were added to their usual maintenance.

By this arrangement the villeins formed a kind of association with their masters. The riches which they acquired in this advantageous market enabled them to offer a fixed rent for the grounds with which they were intrusted, upon the condition that the overplus should belong to them. As the lords acquired by these means, without risk or uneasiness, from their possessions, as much, or more income, than they had formerly obtained, this practice gained credit, and was soon universally adopted. It was no longer the interest of the proprietor to attend to slaves who cultivated at their own expence, and who were exact in their payments. Thus ended this personal slavery.

It sometimes happened, that a bold enterprising man, who had laid out considerable funds on his farm, was driven from it before he had reaped the fruits of his advances. This inconvenience occasioned the requisition of leases for several years. They were extended, in process of time, to the whole life of the cultivator, and were often settled upon his most distant posterity. This was the termination of real slavery.

This great change, brought on in a manner by itself, was hastened by a cause which deserves to be observed. All the European governments were then aristocratic. The chief of every republic was perpetually at war with his barons. Being for the most part unable to resist them by force, he was obliged to have recourse to artifice. That artifice, which was employed to the greatest advantage, was to protect the slaves against the tyranny of their masters, and to undermine the power of the nobles, by diminishing the dependence of their subjects. It is not improbable but that some kings favoured the spirit of liberty, from the only motive of general utility; but most of them were visibly induced to adopt this fortunate policy, more on account of their personal interests, than from principles of humanity and benevolence.

However this may be, the revolution was so complete, that liberty became more general throughout the greatest

part of Europe, than it had been in any climate, or in any age. In all ancient governments, in those even which are always proposed to us as models, most of the people were condemned to a shameful and cruel servitude. The more the societies acquired knowledge, riches, and power, the more did the number of slaves increase, and the more deplorable became their fate. Athens reckoned twenty vassals to one citizen. The disproportion was still greater at Rome, become the mistress of the universe. In both the republics, slavery was carried to the utmost excess of fatigue, of misery, and of ignominy. Since it hath been abolished among us, the people are infinitely more happy, even under the most despotic empires, than they were formerly under the best regulated democracies.

But no sooner was domestic liberty revived in Europe, than it was annihilated in America. The Spaniards, whom the waves first cast upon these shores of the New World, did not imagine they owed any duties to a set of men who were not of their complexion, and who did not practice their customs or their religion. They considered them only as the instruments of their avarice, and loaded them with irons. These weak men, who had not the habit of labour, soon expired among the vapours of the mines, or in other occupations almost as destructive. Slaves were then sent for from Africa. Their number hath increased in proportion as the cultivations have been extended. The Portuguese, the Dutch, the English, the French, the Danes, all these nations, whether free or enslaved, have fought, without remorse, an increase of fortune in the labours, the blood, and the despair of these unfortunate people. What a horrid system !

Liberty is the property of one's self. Three kinds of it are distinguished : natural liberty, civil liberty, and political liberty ; that is to say the liberty of the individual, the liberty of the citizen, and the liberty of a nation. Natural liberty is the right granted by nature, to every man to dispose of himself at pleasure. Civil liberty is the right which is insured by society to every citizen, of doing every thing which is not contrary to the laws. Political liberty is the state of a people who have not alienated their sovereignty, and who either make their own laws, or who constitute a part in the system of their legislation.

The first of these liberties is, after reason, the distinguishing characteristic of man. Brutes are chained up, and kept in subjection, because they have no notion of what is just or unjust, no idea of grandeur or meanness. But in man, liberty is the principle of his vices or his virtues. None but a free man can say, I will or I will not ; and consequently none but a free man can be worthy of praise, or be liable to censure.

Without liberty, or the property of one's own body, and the enjoyment of one's mind, no man can be either a husband, a father, a relation, or a friend ; he hath neither a country, a fellow-citizen, nor a God. The slave, impelled by the wicked man, and who is the instrument of his wickedness, is inferior even to the dog, let loose by the Spaniard upon the American ; for conscience which the dog hath not, still remains with the man. He who basely abdicates his liberty, gives himself up to remorse, and to the greatest misery which can be experienced by a thinking and sensible being. If there be not any power under the heavens, which can change my nature and reduce me to the state of brutes, there is none which can dispose of my liberty. God is my father, and not my master ; I am his child and not his slave. How is it possible that I should grant to political power, what I refuse to divine omnipotence ?

Will these eternal and immutable truths, the foundation of all morality, the basis of all rational government be contested ? They will, and the audacious argument will be dictated by barbarous and sordid avarice. Behold that proprietor of a vessel, who leaning upon his desk, and with the pen in his hand, regulates the number of enormities he may cause to be committed on the coasts of Guinea ; who considers at leisure, what number of firelocks he shall want to obtain one negro, what fetters will be necessary to keep him chained on-board his ship, what whips will be required to make him work ; who calculates with coolness every drop of blood which the slave must necessarily expend in labour for him, and how much it will produce ; who considers whether a negro woman will be of more advantage to him by her feeble labours, or by going through the dangers of child-birth. You shudder !—If there existed any religion which tolerated, or which gave only a tacit sanc-

tion to such kind of horrors ; if, absorbed in some idle or seditious questions, it did not incessantly exclaim against the authors or the instruments of this tyranny ; if it should consider it as a crime in a slave to break his chains ; if it should suffer to remain in its community, the iniquitous judge who condemns the fugitive to death ; if such a religion, I say, existed, ought not the ministers of it to be suffocated under the ruins of their altars ?

Men or demons, whichever you are, will you dare to justify the attempts you make against my independence, by pleading the right of the strongest ! What ! is not the man who wants to enslave me guilty ? Doth he only make use of his rights ! Where are these rights ? Who hath stamped them with a character sacred enough to silence mine ? I hold from nature the right of defending myself ; and it hath not given thee that of attacking me. If thou dost think thyself authorized to oppress me, because thou art stronger or more dexterous than I am, complain not if my vigorous arm shall rip up thy bosom in search of thy heart. Complain not, when in thy torn entrails thou shalt feel that death which I shall have conveyed into them with thy food. I am stronger or more dexterous than thou art ; be the victim in thy turn, and expiate the crime of having been an oppressor.

But it is alleged, that in all regions, and in all ages, slavery hath been more or less established.

I grant it ; but what doth it signify to me, what other people in other ages have done ? Are we to appeal to the customs of ancient times, or to our conscience ? Are we to listen to the suggestions of interest, of infatuation, and of barbarism, rather than to those of reason and of justice ! If the universality of a practice were admitted as a proof of its innocence, we should then have a complete apology for usurpations, conquests, and for every species of oppression.

But the ancients, it is said, thought themselves to be masters of the lives of their slaves ; and we, become more humane, dispose only of their liberty and of their labours.

It is true, the progress of knowledge hath enlightened the minds of all modern legislators upon this important point. All codes of laws, without exception, have exerted themselves for the preservation of man, even of

him who languishes in a state of slavery. They have agreed, that his existence should be put under the protection of the magistrates, and that the tribunals of justice alone should be able to hasten the end of it. But hath this law, the most sacred of all social institutions, ever been put in force? Is not America peopled with atrocious colonists, who insolently usurp the rights of the sovereign, and destroy by the sword, or by fire, the unfortunate victims of their avarice? Doth not this sacrilegious infraction of the laws, to the disgrace of all Europe, still remain unpunished? I challenge any defender or panegyrist of our humanity and of our justice, to adduce an instance of any one of these assassins having lost his life upon a scaffold.

Let us suppose, that the regulations which, according to the panegyrist, do so much honour to our age, be strictly observed; will the slave be, on that account, much less an object of compassion? What! does not the master, who disposes of my strength at his pleasure, likewise dispose of my life, which depends on the voluntary and proper use of my faculties? What is existence to him who has not the disposal of it? I cannot kill my slave; but I can make him bleed under the whip of an executioner; I can overwhelm him with sorrows, drudgery, and want; I can injure him every way, and secretly undermine the principles and springs of his life; I can smother, by slow punishments, the wretched infant which a negro woman carries in her womb. Thus the laws protect the slave against a violent death, only to leave to my cruelty the right of making him die by degrees. The right of slavery is, in fact, that of perpetrating all sorts of crimes: those crimes which invade property; for slaves are not suffered to have any even in their own persons: those crimes which destroy personal safety; for the slave may be sacrificed to the caprice of his master: those crimes which make modesty shudder. —My blood rises at these horrid images. I detest, I abhor the human species composed only of victims and executioners; and if it is never to become better, may it be annihilated!

But these negroes, say they, are a race of men born for slavery; their dispositions are narrow, treacherous, and wicked; they themselves allow the superiority of our under-

standings, and almost acknowledge the justice of our authority.

The minds of the negroes are contracted ; because slavery destroys all the springs of the soul. They are wicked ; but not sufficiently so with you. They are treacherous ; because they are under no obligation to speak truth to their tyrants. They acknowledge the superiority of our understandings, because we have perpetuated their ignorance : they allow the justice of our authority, because we have abused their weakness. As it was impossible for us to maintain our superiority by force, we have, by a criminal policy, had recourse to cunning. We have almost persuaded them that they were a singular species, born only for dependence, for subjection, for labour, and for chastisement. We have neglected nothing that might tend to degrade these unfortunate people, and we have afterwards upbraided them for their meanness.

But these negroes, it is further urged, were born slaves.

Barbarians, will you persuade me, that a man can be the property of a sovereign, a son the property of a father, a wife the property of a husband, a domestic the property of a master, a negro the property of a planter ?

Proud and disdainful being, who dost disavow thy brethren, wilt thou never perceive that this contempt recoils upon thyself ? If thou dost wish that thy pride should be ennobled, exert a sufficient elevation of mind, to make it consist in the necessary affinities which thou hast with these unfortunate men whom thou dost debase.

One common Father, an immortal soul, a future state of felicity, such is thy true glory, and such likewise is theirs.

But it is government itself that sells the slaves.

How did the state acquire that right ? Let the magistrate be ever so absolute, is he proprietor of the subjects submitted to his empire ? Hath he any further authority, but that with which he is intrusted by the citizen ? And have any people ever had the privilege of disposing of their liberty ?

But these slaves have sold themselves. If they belong to themselves, they have a right to dispose of themselves. It is his business to put a price on his liberty ; and when that

is settled, whoever gives him the money, hath acquired a legal right over him.

No man hath the right of selling himself ; because he hath no right to accede to every thing which an unjust, violent, and depraved master might require of him. He is the property of God, who is his first master, and from whose authority he is never released. The man who sells him, makes a deceitful bargain with his purchaser, because he loses his own value. And the money, as soon as it is paid to him, remains, with his person, in the hands of his master. What property can a man be in possession of, who hath given up every right of property ? Nothing can belong to him who hath agreed to have nothing. He cannot even have virtue, honesty, nor a will of his own. The man who hath reduced himself to the condition of a destructive weapon, is a madman, and not a slave. A man may sell his life, in the same manner as a soldier does, but he cannot as a slave ; and this constitutes the difference of the two conditions.

But these slaves had been taken in war, and would have been murdered if we had not interfered.

Would there have been any wars without you ? Are not the dissensions among those people owing to yourselves ? Do you not carry destructive weapons to them ? Do you not inspire them with the desire of using them ? Will your vessels never forsake those deplorable shores, till after the destruction of the miserable race who inhabit them ? Why do you not suffer the victor to make what use he chooses of his victory ; and why do you become his accomplice ?

But they were criminals, who deserved death, or the greatest punishments, and were condemned in their own country to slavery. Are you then the executioners of the people of Africa ? Beside, who was it that condemned them ? Do you not know, that in a despotic state there is no criminal but the tyrant ? The subject of an absolute prince is the same as the slave in a state repugnant to nature. Every thing that contributes to keep a man in such a state, is an attempt against his person. Every power which fixes him to the tyranny of one man, is the power of his enemies : and all those who are about him, are the authors or abettors of this violence. His mother, who taught him the first lessons of obedience ; his neighbour, who set

him the example of it : his superiors, who compelled him into this state ; and his equals, who led him into it by their opinion : all these are the ministers and instruments of tyranny. The tyrant can do nothing of himself ; he is only the *primum mobile* of those efforts which all his subjects exert to their own mutual oppression. He keeps them in a state of perpetual war, which renders robberies, treasons, assassinations, lawful. Thus, like the blood which flows in his veins, all crimes originate from his heart, and return thither as to their primary source. Caligula used to say, that if the whole human race had had but one head, he should have taken pleasure in cutting it off. Socrates would have said, that if all crimes were heaped upon one head, that should be the one which ought to be stricken off.

But they enjoy more felicity in America than they did in Africa.

Wherefore then are these slaves constantly fighting after their own country ? Why do they resume their liberty as soon as they are able ? Why do they prefer deserts, and the society of wild beasts, to a condition that appears to you so mild ? Why doth despair induce them to destroy themselves, or to poison you ? Why do their women so frequently procure abortion, in order that their children may not partake of their melancholy destiny ? When you speak to us of the happiness of your slaves, you are false to yourselves, and you deceive us. It is the utmost pitch of extravagance to attempt to transform so strange a barbarity into an act of humanity.

But it is urged, that in Europe, as well as in America, the people are slaves. The only advantage we have over the negroes is, that we can break one chain to put on another.

It is but too true ; most nations are enslaved. The multitude is generally sacrificed to the passions of a few privileged oppressors. There is scarce a region known, where a man can flatter himself that he is master of his person, that he can dispose, at pleasure, of his inheritance ; and that he can quietly enjoy the fruits of his industry. Even in those countries that are least under the yoke of servitude, the citizen, deprived of the produce of his labour, by the wants incessantly renewed of a rapacious or needy government, is continually restrained in the most lawful means of

acquiring felicity. Liberty is stifled in all parts, by extravagant superstitions, by barbarous customs, and by obsolete laws. It will one day certainly rise again from its ashes. In proportion as morality and policy shall be improved, man will recover his rights. But wherefore, while we are waiting for these fortunate times, and these enlightened ages of prosperity, wherefore must there be an unfortunate race, to whom even the comfortable and honourable name of freeman is denied, and who, notwithstanding the instability of events, must be deprived of the hope even of obtaining it? Whatever, therefore, may be said, the condition of these unfortunate people is very different from ours.

The last argument which hath been used in justification of slavery, hath been to say, that it was the only method which could be found to lead negroes to the blessings of eternal life, by the great benefit of baptism.

O beneficent Jesus! how is it possible that thy mild maxims could have been perverted to justify such an infinite number of horrid acts? If the christian religion did really thus give a sanction to the avarice of empires, its sanguinary tenets ought for ever to be proscribed. It should either be abolished, or it should disavow, in the face of the whole universe, the enormities that are imputed to it. Let not its ministers be apprehensive of displaying too much enthusiasm upon such a subject. The more they shall be inflamed upon it, the better will they serve their cause. Tranquillity would be criminal in them, and wisdom will break forth in their transports.

The man who defends the system of slavery, will undoubtedly complain, that we have not allowed to his arguments all the energy of which they were susceptible. This may possibly be. Who is the man, who would prostitute his talents in the defence of the most abominable of all causes, or who would employ his eloquence, if he had any, in the justification of a multitude of murders already committed, and of a multitude of others ready to be perpetrated? Executioner of thy brethren, take thyself the pen in thy hand if thou darest, quiet the perturbations of thy conscience, and harden thine accomplices in their crimes.

I could have refuted with greater energy, and more at large, the arguments I had to combat; but the subject was not worth the pains. Are many exertions due, or must the

utmost intenseness of thought be bestowed upon him who doth not speak as he thinks? Would not the silence of contempt be more suitable, than dispute with him who pleads for his own interest against justice and against his own conviction?

I have already said too much for the honest and feeling man. I shall never be able to say enough for the inhuman trader.

Let us, therefore, hasten to substitute the light of reason and the sentiments of nature to the blind ferociousness of our ancestors. Let us break the bonds of so many victims to our mercenary principles, should we even be obliged to discard a commerce which is founded only on injustice, and the object of which is luxury.

But even this is not necessary. There is no occasion to give up those conveniences which custom hath so much endeared to us. We may draw them from Africa itself. The most valuable of them are indigenous there, and it would be an easy matter to naturalize the others. Can there be a doubt, that a people, who sell their children in order to satisfy some transient caprices, would determine to cultivate their lands, that they might enjoy habitually all the advantages of a virtuous and well-regulated society?

Perhaps it would not even be impossible to obtain these productions from the colonies without peopling them with slaves. The provisions might be gathered by the hands of free people, and would from that time be consumed without remorse.

In order to obtain this end, which is generally considered as chimerical, it would not be necessary, according to the ideas of an enlightened man, to release from their chains those unfortunate people, who are either born, or have grown old in servitude. These stupid men, who would not have been prepared for such a change of situation, would be incapable of conducting themselves, they would spend their lives in habitual indolence, or in the commission of all kinds of crimes. The great benefit of liberty must be preserved for their posterity, and even that with some modifications. These children, till they attain their twentieth year, should belong to the masters of the manufacture or plantation where they were born, in order that he may be reimbursed the expences which he will have been obliged to incur for bringing them up. The five following years

they should still be obliged to serve him, but for a stipulated salary settled by the law. After this time they should be independent, provided their conduct had not deserved much censure. If they should have been guilty of any weighty crime, they should be condemned by the magistrates to public labour for a more or less considerable time. A hut should be given to the new citizens, with ground sufficient to make a small garden, and the treasury should be at the expence of this establishment. No regulation should deprive these men, become free, of the power of extending the property which shall have been gratuitously bestowed upon them. To put such restraints upon their activity and their intelligence, would be to lose, by absurd laws, the fruits of so laudable an institution.

This arrangement, according to all appearances, would be attended with the happiest effects. The population of the blacks, which is at present checked by the regret of bringing into the world none but beings who are condemned to misfortune and infamy, will make a rapid progress. This offspring will be most tenderly taken care of by those very mothers who often took inexpressible delight in stifling them, or in seeing them perish. These men, accustomed to occupation, in expectation of certain liberty, and who will not have an extent of property sufficient for their subsistence, will sell their labours to whomsoever would be inclined or able to pay for them. Their work will indeed cost more than that of the slaves, but it will also be more profitable. A greater degree of labour will give a greater abundance of productions to the colonies, which will be enabled, by their riches, to acquire a greater quantity of merchandize from the mother-country.

Is it then apprehended, that the facility of acquiring subsistence without labour, on a soil naturally fertile, and of dispensing with the want of clothes, would plunge these men in idleness? Why then do not the inhabitants of Europe confine themselves to such labours as are of indispensable necessity? Why do they exhaust their powers in laborious employments, which tend only to the gratification of a few momentary fancies? There are amongst us a thousand professions, some more laborious than others, which owe their origin to our institutions. Human laws have given rise to a variety of factitious wants, which otherwise

would never have had an existence. By disposing of every species of property according to their capricious institutions, they have subjected an infinite number of people to the imperious will of their fellow-creatures, so far as even to make them sing and dance for subsistence. We have amongst us beings, formed like ourselves, who have consented to bury themselves under mountains, in order to furnish us with metals, and with copper, which may perhaps poison us: why do we imagine that the negroes are less dupes and less foolish than the Europeans?

While we are restoring these unhappy beings to liberty, we must be careful to subject them to our laws and manners, and to offer them our superfluities. We must give them a country, give them interests to study, productions to cultivate, and articles of consumption agreeable to their respective tastes, and our colonies will never want hands, which, being eased of their chains, will become more active and robust.

In order to overturn the whole system of slavery, which is supported by passions so universal, by laws so authentic, by the emulation of such powerful nations, by prejudices still more powerful, to what tribunal shall we refer the cause of humanity, which so many men are in confederacy to betray? Sovereigns of the earth, you alone can bring about this revolution. If you do not sport with the rest of mortals, if you do not regard the power of kings as the right of a successful plunder, and the obedience of subjects as artfully obtained from their ignorance, reflect on your own obligations. Refuse the sanction of your authority to the infamous and criminal traffic of men turned into so many herds of cattle, and this trade will cease. For once unite, for the happiness of the world, those powers and designs which have been so often exerted for its ruin. If some one among you would venture to found the expectation of this opulence and grandeur on the generosity of all the rest, he instantly becomes an enemy of mankind, who ought to be destroyed. You may carry fire and sword into his territories. Your armies will soon be inspired with the sacred enthusiasm of humanity. You will then perceive what difference virtue makes between men who succour the oppressed, and mercenaries who serve tyrants.

- But what am I saying? Let the ineffectual calls of humanity be no longer pleaded with the people and their masters: perhaps they have never been attended to in any public transactions. If then, ye nations of Europe, interest alone can exert its influence over you, listen to me once more. Your slaves stand in no need either of your generosity or your counsels, in order to break the sacrilegious yoke of their oppression. Nature speaks a more powerful language than philosophy or interest. Already have two colonies of fugitive negroes been established, to whom treaties and power give a perfect security from your attempts. These are so many indications of the impending storm, and the negroes only want a chief, sufficiently courageous, to lead them on to vengeance and slaughter.

Where is this great man, whom nature owes to her afflicted, oppressed, and tormented children? Where is he? He will undoubtedly appear, he will shew himself, he will lift up the sacred standard of liberty. This venerable signal will collect around him the companions of his misfortunes. They will rush on with more impetuosity than torrents; they will leave behind them, in all parts, indelible traces of their just resentment. Spaniards, Portuguese, English, French, Dutch, all their tyrants will become the victims of fire and sword. The plains of America will suck up with transport the blood which they have so long expected, and the bones of so many wretches, heaped upon one another, during the course of so many centuries, will bound for joy. The Old World will join its plaudits to those of the New. In all parts the name of the hero, who shall have restored the rights of the human species, will be blest; in all parts trophies will be erected to his glory. Then will the *black code* be no more; and the *white code* will be a dreadful one, if the conqueror only regards the right of reprisals.

Till this revolution shall take place, the negroes groan under the oppression of labours, the description of which cannot but interest us more and more in their destiny.

The culture of the soil of the American archipelago hath been hitherto neglected.

THE soil of the American islands hath little resemblance to ours. Its productions are very different, as well as the manner of cultivating them. Except some pot-herbs, nothing is sown there; every thing is planted.

Tobacco being the first production that was cultivated, as its roots do not strike deep, and the least injury destroys them, a simple harrow was only employed to prepare the lands which were to receive it, and to extirpate the noxious weeds which would have choked it. This custom still prevails.

When more troublesome cultures began to be attended to, and which were less delicate, the hoe was made use of to work and weed; but it was not employed over the whole extent of ground that was to be cultivated. It was thought sufficient to dig a hole for the reception of the plant.

The inequality of the ground, most commonly full of hillocks, probably gave rise to this custom. It might be apprehended, that the rains, which always fall in torrents, should destroy, by the cavities they make, the land that had been turned up. Indolence, and the want of means at the time of the first settlements, extended this practice to the most level plains; and custom, which no one ever thought of deviating from, gave a sanction to it. At length some planters, who were adventurous enough to discard former prejudices, thought of using the plough; and it is probable that this method will become general wherever it shall be found practicable. It has every circumstance in its favour that can make it desirable.

All the lands of the islands were virgin lands, when the Europeans undertook to clear them. The first that were occupied, have for a long time yielded less produce than they did in the beginning. Those which have been successively cleared, are likewise more or less exhausted, in proportion to the period of their first cultivation. Whatever their fertility at first might have been, they all lose it in process of time, and they will soon cease to requite the labours of those who cultivate them, if art be not exerted to assist nature.

It is a principle of agriculture generally admitted by naturalists, that the earth becomes fertile only in proportion as it can receive the influence of the air, and of all those meteors which are directed by this powerful agent, such as fogs, dews, and rains. Continual tillage can only procure this advantage to it: the islands in particular constantly require it. The wet season must be chosen for turning up the ground, the dryness of which would be an impediment

to fertility. Ploughing cannot be attended with any inconvenience in lands that are level. One might prevent the danger of having shelving grounds destroyed by storms, by making furrows transversely, on a line that should cross that of the slope of the hillocks. If the declivity were so steep that the cultivated grounds could be carried away, notwithstanding the furrows, small drains, something deeper, might be added for the same purpose at particular distances, which would partly break the force and velocity that the steepness of the hills adds to the fall of heavy rains.

The utility of the plough would not be merely limited to the producing a greater portion of the vegetable juice in plants; it would make their produce the more certain. The islands are the regions of insects: their multiplication there is favoured by a constant heat, and one race succeeds another without interruption. The extensive ravages they make are well known. Frequent and successive ploughing would check the progress of this devouring race, disturb their re-production, kill great numbers of them, and destroy the greatest part of their eggs. Perhaps this expedient would not be sufficient against the rats, which ships have brought from Europe into America, where they have increased to that degree, that they often destroy one third of the crops. The industry of slaves might also be called in to assist, and their vigilance might be encouraged by some gratification.

The use of the plough would probably introduce the custom of manuring: it is already known on the greatest part of the coast. The manure there in use is called varech, a kind of sea-plant, which, when ripe, is detached from the water, and driven on the strand by the motion of the waves: it is very productive of fertility; but if employed without previous preparation, it communicates to the sugar a disagreeable bitterness, which must arise from the salts that are impregnated with oily particles abounding in sea plants. Perhaps, in order to take off this bitter taste, it would only be necessary to burn the plant, and make use of the ashes. The salts being by this operation detached from the oily particles, and triturated by vegetation, would circulate more freely in the sugar-cane, and impart to it purer juices.

The interior parts of this country have not till lately been dunged. Necessity will make this practice become more

general; and in time the soil of America will be assisted by the same methods of cultivation as the soil of Europe; but with more difficulty. In the islands, where herds of cattle are not so numerous, and where there is seldom the convenience of stables, it is to have recourse to other kinds of manure, and multiply them as much as possible, in order to compensate the quality by the quantity. The greatest resource will always be found in the weeds, from which useful plants must be constantly freed. These must be collected together in heaps, and left to putrify. The colonists who cultivate coffee have set the example of his practice; but with that degree of indolence which the heat of the climate occasions in all manual labour. A pile of weeds is heaped up at the bottom of the coffee-trees, without regarding whether these weeds, which they do not even take the trouble of covering with earth, heat the tree, and harbour the insects that prey upon it. They have been equally negligent in the management of their cattle.

All the domestic quadrupeds of Europe were imported into America by the Spaniards; and it is from their settlements that the colonies of other nations have been supplied. Excepting hogs, which are found to thrive best in countries abounding with aquatic productions, insects, and reptiles, and are become larger and better tasted, all these animals have degenerated, and the few that remain in the islands are very small. Though the badness of the climate may contribute something to this degeneracy, the want of care is perhaps the principal cause. They always lie in the open field. They never have either bran or oats given them, and are at grass the whole year. The colonists have not even the attention of dividing the meadows into separate portions, in order to make their cattle to pass from one into the other. They always feed on the same spot, without allowing the grass time to spring up again. Such pastures can only produce weak and watery juices. Too quick a vegetation prevents them from being properly ripened. Hence the animals, destined for the food of man, afford only flesh that is tough and flabby.

Those animals, which are reserved for labour, do but very little service. The oxen draw but light loads, and that not all day long. They are always four in number. They are not yoked by the head, but by the neck, after the

Spanish custom. They are not stimulated by the goad, but driven by a whip, and are directed by two drivers.

When the roads do not allow the use of carriages, mules are employed instead of oxen. These are saddled after a simpler method than in Europe, but much inferior to it in strength. A mat is fixed on their back, to which two hooks are suspended on each side, the first that are casually met with in the woods. Thus equipped, they carry, at most, half the weight that European horses can bear, and go over but half the ground in the same time.

The pace of their horses is not so slow: they have preserved something of the fleetness, fire, and docility, of those of Andalusia, from which they derived their pedigree; but their strength is not answerable to their spirit. It is necessary to breed a great number of them, in order to obtain that service which might be had from a smaller number in Europe. Three or four of them must be harnessed to very light carriages used by indolent people for making excursions, which they call journeys; but which with us would only be an airing.

The degeneracy of the animals in the islands might have been prevented, retarded, or diminished, if care had been taken to renew them by a foreign race. Stallions brought from colder or warmer countries, would in some degree have corrected the influence of the climate, feed, and rearing. With the mares of the country they would have produced a new race far superior, as they would have come from a climate different from that into which they were imported.

It is very extraordinary, that so simple an idea should never have occurred to any of the planters; and that there has been no legislature attentive enough to its interests, to substitute in its settlements the bison to the common ox. Every one who is acquainted with this animal, must recollect that the bison has a softer and brighter skin, a disposition less dull and stupid than our bullock, and a quickness and docility far superior. It is swift in running, and when mounted can supply the place of a horse. It thrives as well in southern countries, as the ox that we employ loves cold or temperate climates. This species is known only in the eastern islands, and in the greater part of Africa. If custom had less influence than it commonly has, even over the

wisest governments, they would have been sensible that this useful animal was singularly well adapted to the great archipelago of America, and that it would be very easy to export it, at a very small expence, from the Gold coast, or the coast of Angola.

Two rich planters, one in Barbadoes, the other in St. Domingo, equally stricken with the weakness of those animals, which, according to established custom, were employed in drawing and carrying, endeavoured to substitute the camel to them. This experiment, formerly tried without success in Peru by the Spaniards, did not succeed better here, nor was it possible it should. It is well known, that though a native of hot countries, it dreads excessive heat, and can as little thrive as propagate under the burning sky of the torrid zone, as in the temperate ones. It would have been better to have tried the buffalo.

The buffalo is a very dirty animal, and of a fierce disposition. Its caprices are sudden and frequent. Its skin is firm, light, and almost impenetrable, and its horns serviceable for many purposes. Its flesh is black and hard, and disagreeable to the taste and smell. The milk of the female is not so sweet, but much more copious than that of the cow. Reared like the ox, to which it hath a striking resemblance, it greatly surpasses it in strength and swiftness. Two buffaloes yoked to a waggon by means of a ring passed through their nose, will draw as much as four of the stoutest bullocks, and in less than half the time. They owe this double superiority to the advantage of having longer legs, and a more considerable bulk of body, the whole power of which is employed in drawing, because they naturally carry their head and neck low. As this animal is originally a native of the torrid zone, and is larger, stronger, and more manageable in proportion to the heat of the country it is in, it cannot ever have been doubted that it would have been of great service in the Caribbee islands, and have propagated happily there. This is highly probable, especially since the successful experiments that have been made of it at Guiana.

Indolence, and old established customs, which have hindered the propagation of domestic animals, have no less impeded the success of transplanting vegetables. Several kinds of fruit trees have been successively carried to the

islands. Those that have not died, are some wild stocks, the fruit of which is neither beautiful nor good. The greatest part have degenerated very fast, because they have been exposed to a very strong vegetation, ever lively, and constantly quickened by the copious dews of the night and the strong heats of the day, which are the two grand principles of fertility. Perhaps an intelligent observer would have known how to profit from these circumstances, and have been able to raise tolerable fruit; but such men are not found in the colonies. If our kitchen herbs have succeeded better; if they are always springing up again, ever green and ripe; the reason is that they had not to struggle against the climate, where they were assisted by a moist and clammy earth, which is proper for them; and because they required no trouble. The labour of the slaves is employed in the cultivation of more useful productions.

The slaves are employed first to get their subsistence. Rich productions are afterwards expected from them.

THE principal labours of these unhappy men are directed towards those objects that are indispensable to the preservation of their wretched existence. Before their arrival in the islands, potatoes and yams grew without labour in the midst of the forests. The potatoe is a species of convolvulus, which grows up gradually; the leaves of which are alternate, angular, and cordiform; and its flower resembles in figure, and in the number of its parts, that of the ordinary convolvulus. The stem of the yam is climbing, herbaceous, furnished with opposite or alternate leaves, cut in the shape of a heart, and which shoot forth from their axillæ clusters of male flowers on one stem, and female ones upon another, each provided with one calix that hath six divisions. The male flowers have six stamina. The pistil of the female flowers is surmounted with three styles. It adheres to the calix, and becomes, along with it, a close capsula, with three cells filled with two seeds. These plants, which are sufficiently multiplied by nature alone for the subsistence of a small number of savages, must have been cultivated, when it became necessary to feed a more considerable population. This was accordingly resolved upon, and other plants were joined to them, drawn from the country itself of the new consumers.

Africa hath furnished the islands with a shrub, which grows to the height of four feet, lives four years, and is useful throughout its whole duration. Its leaves are composed of three smaller elongated leaves, united on one common petal. Its flowers, which are yellowish, and irregular, as those of leguminous plants, are disposed in clusters at the extremity of the branches. It bears pods, which contain a number of a kind of pea, which is very wholesome and very nourishing. This shrub is called the Angola pea. It flourishes equally in lands naturally barren, and in those the salts of which have been exhausted. For this reason, the best managers among the colonists never fail to sow it on all those parts of their estates, which in other hands would remain uncultivated.

The most valuable present, however, which the islands have received from Africa, is the manioc. Most historians have considered this plant as a native of America. It does not appear on what foundation this opinion is supported, though pretty generally received. But were the truth of it demonstrated, the Caribbee islands would yet stand indebted for the manioc to the Europeans, who imported it thither along with the Africans, who fed upon it. Before our invasions, the intercourse between the continent of America and these isles was so trifling, that a production of the continent might be unknown in the archipelago of the Antilles. It is certain, however, that the savages who offered our first navigators bananas, yams, and potatoes, offered them no manioc; that the Caribs in Dominica and St. Vincent had it from us; that the character of the savages did not render them fit to conduct a culture requiring so much attention; that this culture can only be carried on in very open fields; and that in the forests, with which these islands were overgrown, there were no clear and unencumbered spaces of ground above five and twenty toises square. In short, it was beyond a doubt, that the use of the manioc was not known till after the arrival of the negroes; and that from time immemorial it hath constituted the principal food of a great part of Africa.

However this may be, the manioc is a plant which is propagated by slips. It is set in furrows that are five or six inches deep, which are filled with the same earth that has been dugged out. These furrows are at the distance of two

feet, or two feet and a half, from each other, according to the nature of the ground. The shrub rises a little above six feet, and its trunk is about the thickness of the arm. In proportion as it grows, the lower leaves fall off, leaving a semicircular impression on the stem, and only a few remain towards the top: its wood is tender and brittle. They are always alternate, and deeply cut into several lobes. The extremity of the branches is terminated by clusters of male and female flowers blended together. The calix of the first is in five divisions, and contains ten stamina; that of the second is composed of five pieces. The pistil which they surround is surmounted with three hairy styles, and becomes a rough capsula, with three divisions, filled with three seeds. There is no part of the plant useful except the root, which is tuberosc, and at the end of eight months, or more, grows to the size of a large radish. There are several varieties of them distinguished, which differ in their bulk, their colour, and the time they take in coming to maturity. This is a delicate plant, and the culture of it is laborious; it is incommoded by the vicinity of every kind of herb, and it requires a dry and light soil.

When the roots have acquired their proper size and maturity, they are plucked up, and undergo various preparations, to render them fit for the food of man. Their first skin must be scraped, they must be washed, grated, and afterwards put in a press to extract the juice, which is considered as a very active poison. Any thing that might remain of the venomous principles they contained, is completely evaporated by roasting. When they do not yield any more smoke, they are taken off the iron plate used for this operation, and suffered to cool.

The root of the manioc, grated and reduced into little grains by roasting, is called flour of manioc. The paste of manioc is called cassava, which hath been converted into a cake by roasting without stirring it. It would be dangerous to eat as much cassava as flour of manioc, because the former is less roasted. Both keep a long time, and are very nourishing, but a little difficult of digestion. Though this food seems at first insipid, there are a great number of white people who have been born in these islands, who prefer it to the best wheat. Most of the Spaniards in general use it constantly. The French feed their slaves with it. The

other European nations, who have settlements in the islands, are little acquainted with the manioc. It is from North America that these colonies receive their subsistence; so that if by any accident, which may very possibly take place, their connections with this fertile country were interrupted but for four months, they would be exposed to perish by famine. An avidity, that hath no bounds, makes the colonists of the islands insensible of this imminent danger. All, at least the greater part, find their advantage in turning the whole industry of their slaves towards those productions which are the objects of commerce. The principal of these are indigo, cochineal, cocoa, arnotto, cotton, coffee, and sugar. We have mentioned the three first in the history of the regions under the dominion of Castile, and we will now describe the rest.

THE arnotto is a red dye, called by the Spaniards *achiote*, into which they dip the white wool, whatever colour they intend to give to it. The tree that yields this dye is as high, and more bushy, than the plum-tree. It hath a reddish bark; its leaves are large, alternate, cordiform, and supplied at their base with two stipulæ or membranes, which fall off early. The flowers, disposed in clusters, have a calix of five divisions, and ten petals of a slight purple colour, five of which are internal and smaller. They are found as well as a great number of stamina, under the pistil, which is crowned with a single style. The fruit is a capsula of a deep red colour, stuck with soft points, wide at its base, and narrowed at the top. It opens longitudinally into two great valves, furnished internally with a longitudinal receptacle, covered with seeds. These seeds are done over with a red substance, which may be extracted from them, and which is, properly speaking, the arnotto. This tree flowers and bears fruit twice a-year.

As soon as one of the eight or ten pods which each cluster contains opens of itself, the rest may be gathered. All the seeds are then to be taken out, and thrown directly into large troughs full of water. When the fermentation begins, the seeds must be strongly stirred up with wooden spatulas, till the arnotto be entirely taken off. The whole is then poured into sieves made of rushes, which retain

all the solid parts, and let out a thick, reddish, and fetid liquor, into iron coppers prepared to receive it. As it boils, the scum is skimmed off, and kept in large pans. When the liquor yields no more scum, it is thrown away as useless, and the scum poured back into the copper.

The scum, which is to be boiled for ten or twelve hours, must be constantly stirred with a wooden spatula, to prevent its sticking to the copper, or turning black. When it is boiled enough, and somewhat hardened, it is spread upon boards to cool. It is then made up into cakes of two or three pounds weight, and the whole process is finished.

Cultivation of cotton.

THE cotton shrub, that supplies our manufactures, requires a dry and stony soil, and thrives best in grounds that have already been tilled. Not but that the plant appears to thrive better in fresh lands, than in those which are exhausted; but while it produces more wood, it bears less fruit.

An eastern exposition is fittest for it. The culture of it begins in March and April, and continues during the first spring rains. Holes are made at seven or eight feet distance from each other, and a few seeds thrown in. When they are grown to the height of five or six inches, all the stems are pulled up, except two or three of the strongest. These are cropped twice before the end of August. This precaution is the more necessary, as the wood bears no fruit till after the second pruning; and if the shrub were suffered to grow more than four feet high, the crops would not be greater, nor the fruit so easily gathered.

This useful plant will not thrive, if great attention be not paid to pluck up the weeds which grow about it. Frequent rains will promote its growth, but they must not be incessant. Dry weather is particularly necessary in the months of March and April, which is the time of gathering the cotton, to prevent it from being discoloured and spotted.

In order to renew this shrub, it is cut every two or three years down to the root, which produces several sprigs. Leaves grow upon them, with from three to five lobes, alternately disposed upon the stems, and accompanied with

two stipulæ. At the end of eight or nine months, there appear some yellow flowers, streaked with red, rather large, and resembling the mallow flower in the structure and the number of their parts. The pistil, placed in the middle, becomes a pod, of the size of a pigeon's egg, with three or four cells. Each cell, on bursting, exhibits several roundish seeds, surrounded with a white kind of wadding, which is the cotton, properly so called. This bursting of the fruit indicates its maturity, and the time proper for gathering it.

When it is all gathered in, the seeds must be picked out from the wool. This is done by means of a cotton-mill, which is an engine composed of two rods of hard wood, about eighteen feet long, eighteen lines in circumference, and fluted two lines deep. They are confined at both ends, so as to leave no more distance between them than is necessary for the seed to slip through. At one end is a kind of little millstone, which being put in motion with the foot, turns the rods in contrary directions. They separate the cotton, and throw out the seed contained in it.

THE coffee-tree, originally the produce of Arabia, where nature, scantily supplying the necessities of life, scatters its luxuries with a lavish hand, was long the favourite plant of that fortunate country. The unsuccessful attempts made by the Europeans in the cultivation of it, induced them to believe that the inhabitants of that country steeped the fruit in boiling water, or dried it in the oven, before they sold it, in order to secure to themselves a trade from which they derived most of their wealth. This opinion still prevailed, till the tree itself had been conveyed to Batavia, and afterwards to the island of Bourbon, and to Surinam, when it was demonstrated from experience, that the seed of the coffee tree, as well as of many other plants, will never come to any thing, unless it be put fresh into the ground.

This tree, which flourishes only in those climates where the winters are extremely mild, hath smooth, entire, oval leaves, and sharp like those of the laurel; they are, moreover, opposite, and separate at their base by an intermediate scale. The flowers, disposed in rings, have a white corolla,

resembling that of jessamine, charged with five stamina, and bearing themselves upon the pistil, which being inclosed in a calix of five divisions, becomes along with it a berry, which is at first green, and afterwards reddish, of the size of a small cherry, and filled with two kernels, or beans, of a hard, and as it were horny, substance. These kernels, which are externally convex, and flattened and furrowed on the side where they touch each other, yield, when they have been roasted and reduced to powder, a very agreeable infusion, fit to keep off sleep, and the use of which, anciently adopted in Asia, hath been insensibly spread over the greatest part of the globe.

The best and highest priced coffee is always that which comes from Arabia; but the islands of America, and the coasts of this New World, which have cultivated it from the beginning of this century, furnish a much greater quantity. It is not equally good everywhere. That which grows in a favourable soil, and in an eastern exposure, which enjoys the freshness of the dews and of the rains, and which is ripened by a moderate heat, is superior to any other.

The coffee plants are to be planted in holes of ten or twelve inches, and at intervals of six, seven, eight, or nine feet, according to the nature of the soil. They would naturally grow to the height of eighteen or twenty feet, but they are not allowed to exceed five, in order that their fruit may be conveniently gathered. When thus cropped, they spread their branches in such a manner as to intermix with each other.

Sometimes this tree rewards the labours of the cultivator as early as the third year, and at other times only at the fifth or sixth. Sometimes it doth not produce a pound of coffee, and at other times it yields as much as three or four pounds. In some places it does not last more than twelve or fifteen years, and in others five-and-twenty or thirty. These variations depend much upon the soil on which it is planted.

The coffee of America remained for a long time in a state of imperfection, which brought it into disgrace. No care was taken of it; but this negligence hath gradually diminished. It is only after having been well washed, and deprived of its gum, and after having received all

necessary preparations, that it is at present carried to the mill.

This mill is composed of two wooden rollers, furnished with plates of iron eighteen inches long, and ten or twelve in diameter. These are moveable, and are made to approach a third, which is fixed, and which they call the chops. Above the rollers is a hopper, in which the coffee is put, from whence it falls between the rollers and the chops, where it is stripped of its skin, and divided into two parts, as may be seen by the form of it, after it hath undergone this operation, being flat on one side, and round on the other. From this machine it falls into a brass sieve, where the skin drops between the wires, while the fruit slides over them into baskets, placed ready to receive it. It is then thrown into a vessel full of water, where it soaks for one night, and is afterwards thoroughly washed. When the whole is finished, and well dried, it is put into another machine, which is called the peeling mill. This is a wooden grinder, which is turned vertically upon its trendle by a mule or a horse. In passing over the dried coffee, it takes off the parchment, which is nothing more than a thin skin, that detaches itself from the berry as it grows dry. The parchment being removed, it is taken out of the mill, to be winnowed in another, which is called the winnowing mill. This machine is provided with four pieces of tin, fixed upon an axle, which is turned by a slave with considerable force; and the wind that is made by the motion of these plates clears the coffee of all the pellicles that are mixed with it. It is afterwards put upon a table, where the broken berries, and any filth that may happen to remain, are separated by the negroes. After these operations the coffee is fit for sale.

The price of this berry was at first very trifling. The excessive passion that all Europe took for it raised its value exceedingly: and for that reason its cultivation was carried on with great alacrity, after the peace of 1763. The produce soon exceeded the consumption, and for several years past all the planters have been ruined. They will not recover till after a proper equilibrium hath been established; and it is not in our power to fix the period of this happy revolution.

*Cultivation of
sugar.*

THE cane that yields the sugar is a kind of reed, which commonly rises eight or nine feet, and sometimes higher, according to the nature of the soil. Its most common diameter is of one inch. It is covered with a rind, which is not very hard, and contains a kind of pulp, more or less compact, full of a sweet and viscid juice. It is intersected at intervals with joints, from which originate leaves, that are long, narrow, sharp at their edges, and sulcated at their basis. The lower ones fall off as the stem grows. This is terminated by a silky pannicle, of a considerable size, every flower of which hath three stamina and one single seed, covered with a two-leaved calix, with a shaggy surface.

This plant hath been cultivated from the earliest antiquity in some countries of Asia and Africa. About the middle of the twelfth century, it became known in Sicily, from whence it passed into the southern provinces of Spain. It was afterwards transplanted into Madeira and the Canaries. From these islands, it was brought into the New World, where it succeeded as well as if it had been indigenous there.

All soils are not equally proper for it. Such as are rich and strong, low and marshy, environed with woods, or lately cleared, however large and tall the canes may be, produce only a juice that is aqueous, insipid, of a bad quality, difficult to be boiled, purified, and preserved. Canes planted in a ground where they soon meet with soft stone or rock, have but a very short duration, and yield but little sugar. A light, porous, and deep soil, is by nature most favourable to this production.

The general method of cultivating it, is to prepare a large field; to make at the distance of three feet from one another, furrows eighteen inches long, twelve broad, and six deep; to lay in these two, and sometimes three slips, of about a foot each, taken from the upper part of the cane, and to cover them lightly with earth. From each of the joints in the slips issues a stem, which in time becomes a sugar-cane.

Care should be taken to clear it constantly from the weeds, which never fail to grow around it. This labour only continues for six months. The canes then are sufficiently thick and near one another to destroy every thing that might be

prejudicial to their fertility. They are commonly suffered to grow eighteen months, and are seldom cut at any other time.

From the stock of these issue suckers, which are in their turn cut fifteen months after. This second cutting yields only half of the produce of the first. The planters sometimes make a third cutting, and even a fourth, which are always successively less, however good the soil may be. Nothing, therefore, but want of hands for planting afresh, can oblige a planter to expect more than two crops from his cane.

These crops are not made in all the colonies at the same time. In the Danish, Spanish, and Dutch settlements, they begin in January and continue till October. This method doth not imply any fixed season for the maturity of the sugar-cane. The plant, however, like others, must have its progress; and it hath been justly observed to be in flower in the months of November and December. It must necessarily follow from the custom these nations have adopted, of continuing to gather their crops for ten months without intermission, that they cut some canes which are not ripe enough, and others that are too ripe, and then the fruit hath not the requisite qualities. The time of gathering them should be at a fixed season, and probably the months of March and April are the fittest for it; because all the sweet fruits are ripe at that time, while the sour ones do not arrive to a state of maturity till the months of July and August.

The English cut their canes in March and April; but they are not induced to do this on account of their ripeness. The drought that prevails in their islands renders the rains which fall in September necessary to their planting; and as the canes are eighteen months in growing, this period always brings them to the precise point of maturity.

In order to extract the juice of the canes, when cut, which ought to be done in four-and-twenty hours, otherwise it would turn sour, they are passed between two cylinders of iron, or copper, placed perpendicularly on an immoveable table. The motion of the cylinders is regulated by a horizontal wheel, turned by oxen or horses; but in

water-mills this horizontal wheel derives its movement from a perpendicular one, the circumference of which meeting a current of water, receives an impression which turns it upon its axis: this motion is from right to left, if the current of water strike the upper part of the wheel; from left to right, if it strike the lower part.

From the reservoir, where the juice of the cane is received, it falls into a boiler, where those particles of water are made to evaporate that are most easily separated. This liquor is poured into another boiler, where a moderate fire makes it throw up its first scum. When it has lost its clammy consistence, it is made to run into a third boiler, where it throws up much more scum by means of an increased degree of heat. It then receives the last boiling in a fourth cauldron, the fire of which is three times stronger than the first.

This last fire determines the success of the process. If it hath been well managed, the sugar forms crystals that are larger or smaller, more or less bright, in proportion to the greater or less quantity of oil they abound with. If the fire hath been too violent, the substance is reduced to a black and charcoal extract, which cannot produce any more essential salt. If the fire hath been too moderate, there remains a considerable quantity of extraneous oils, which stain the sugar, and render it thick and blackish; so that when it is to be dried, it becomes always porous, because the spaces which these oils filled up remain empty.

As soon as the sugar is cool, it is poured into earthen vessels of a conic figure; the base of the cone is open, and its top hath a hole, through which the water is carried off that hath not formed any crystals. This is called the syrup. After this water hath flowed through, the raw sugar remains, which is rich, brown, and salt.

The greatest part of the islands leave to the Europeans the care of giving sugar the other preparations which are necessary to make it fit for use. This practice spares the expence of large buildings, leaves them more negroes to employ in agriculture, allows them to make their cultures without any interruption for two or three months together, and employs a greater number of ships for exportation.

The French planters alone have thought it their interest to manage their sugars in a different manner. To whatever degree of exactness the juice of the sugar-cane may be boiled, there always remains an infinite number of foreign particles attached to the salts of the sugar, to which they appear to be what lees are to wine. These give it a dead colour, and the taste of tartar, of which they endeavour to deprive it, by an operation called earthing. This consists in putting again the raw sugars into a new earthen vessel, in every respect similar to that we have mentioned. The surface of the sugar, throughout the whole extent of the basis of the cone, is then covered with a white marl, on which water is poured. In filtering it through this marl, the water carries with it a portion of a calcareous earth, which it finds upon the different saline particles, when this earth meets with oily substances to which it is united. This water is afterwards drained off through the opening at the top of the mould, and a second syrup is procured, which they call *molasses*, and which is so much the worse, in proportion as the sugar was finer: that is, contained less extraneous oil: for then the calcareous earth, dissolved by the water, passes alone, and carries with it all its acrid particles.

This earthing is followed by the last preparation, which is effected by fire, and serves for the evaporating of the moisture with which the salts are impregnated during the process of earthing. In order to do this, the sugar is taken in its whole form out of the conical vessel of earth, and conveyed into a stove, which receives from an iron furnace a gentle and gradual heat, where it is left till the sugar is become very dry, which commonly happens at the end of three weeks.

Though the expence which this process requires be in general useless, since the earthed sugar is commonly refined in Europe in the same manner as the raw sugar, all the inhabitants of the French islands, however, who are able to purify their sugars in this manner, generally take this trouble. To a nation whose navy is weak, this method is extremely advantageous, as it enables it, in times of war, to convey into its own mother-country the most valuable cargoes with a less number of ships than if only raw sugars were sent.

One may judge from the species of sugars, but much better from that which has undergone the earthing, of what sort of salts it is composed. If the soil where the cane hath been planted be hard, stony, and sloping, the salts will be white, angular, and the grain very large. If the soil be marly, the colour will be the same; but the granulations, being cut on fewer sides, will reflect less light. If the soil be rich and spongy, the granulations will be nearly spherical, the colour will be dusky, the sugar will slip under the finger, without any unequal feel. This last kind of sugar is considered as the worst.

Whatever may be the reason, those places that have a northern aspect produce the best sugar; and marly grounds yield the greatest quantity. The preparations which the sugar that grows in these kinds of soil require, are less tedious and troublesome than those which the sugar requires that is produced in a rich land. But these observations admit of infinite variety, the investigation of which is properly the province of chemists, or speculative planters.

Beside sugar, the cane furnishes syrup, the value of which is only a twelfth of that of the price of sugars. The best syrup is that which runs from the first vessel into the second, when the raw sugar is made. It is composed of the grosser particles, which carry along with them the salts of sugar, whether it contain or separate them in its passage. The syrup of an inferior kind, which is more bitter, and less in quantity, is formed by the water which carries off the tartareous and earthy particles of the sugar when it is washed. By means of fire, some sugar is besides extracted from the first syrup, which, after this operation, is of less value than the second.

Both these kinds are carried into the north of Europe, where the people use them instead of butter and sugar. In North America they make the same use of them, where they are further employed to give fermentation and an agreeable taste to a liquor called *pruss*, which is only an infusion of the bark of a tree.

This syrup is still more useful, by the secret that hath been discovered, of converting it by distillation into a spiritous liquor, which the English call *rum*, and the French *taffia*. This process, which is very simple, is made by mixing a

third part of syrup with two-thirds of water. When these two substances have sufficiently fermented, which commonly happens at the end of twelve or fifteen days, they are put into a clean still, where the distillation is made as usual. The liquor that is drawn off is equal to the quantity of the syrup employed.

Such is the method which, after many experiments and variations, all the islands have generally adopted in the cultivation of sugar. It is undoubtedly a good one; but, perhaps, it hath not acquired that degree of perfection of which it is capable. If, instead of planting canes in large fields, the ground were parcelled out into divisions of sixty feet, leaving between two planted divisions a space of land uncultivated, such a method would probably be attended with great advantages. In the modern practice, none but the canes which grow on the borders are good, and attain to a proper degree of maturity. Those in the middle of the field in part miscarry, and ripen badly, because they are deprived of a current of air, which only acts by its weight, and seldom gets to the foot of these canes, that are always covered with the leaves.

In this new system of plantation, those portions of land which had not been cultivated would be most favourable for reproduction; when the crops of the planted divisions had been made, which in their turn would be left to recover. It is probable that by this method as much sugar might be obtained as by the present practice; with this additional advantage, that it would require fewer slaves to cultivate it. One may judge what the cultivation of sugar would then produce, by what it now yields, notwithstanding its imperfections.

On a plantation fixed on a good ground, and sufficiently stocked with negroes, with cattle, and all other necessaries, two men will cultivate a square of canes that is a hundred geometrical paces in every direction. This square must yield, on an average, sixty quintals of raw sugar. The common price of a quintal in Europe will be twenty livres [16s. 8d.] after deducting all the expences. This makes an income of 600 livres [25l.] for the labour of each man. One hundred and fifty livres [6l. 5s.] to which the price of syrup and rum must be added, will defray the expences of cultivation; that is to say, for the maintenance of slaves,

for their loss, for their disorders, for their clothes, for repairing their utensils, and other accidents. The nett produce of an acre and a half of land will then be four hundred and fifty livres [18l. 15s.] It would be difficult to find a culture productive of greater emoluments.

It may be objected, that this is stating the produce below its real value, because a square of canes doth not employ two men. But those who would urge such an objection ought to observe, that the making of sugar requires other labours besides those of merely cultivating it, and consequently workmen employed elsewhere than in the fields. The estimate and compensation of these different kinds of service oblige us to deduct from the produce of a square of plantation the expence of maintaining two men.

It is chiefly from the produce of sugar that the islands supply their planters with all the articles of convenience and luxury. They draw from Europe flour, liquors, salt provisions, silks, linens, hardware, and every thing that is necessary for apparel, food, furniture, ornament, convenience, and even luxury. Their consumptions of every kind are prodigious, and must necessarily influence the manners of the inhabitants, the greatest part of whom are rich enough to support them.

Character of the Europeans settled in the American islands.

It should seem that the Europeans, who have been transplanted into the American islands, must no less have degenerated than the animals which they carried over thither. The climate acts on all living beings; but men being less immediately subject to the laws of nature, resist her influence the more, because they are the only beings who act for themselves. The first colonists who settled in the Antilles corrected the activity of a new climate and a new soil, by the conveniences which it was in their power to derive from a commerce that was always open with their former country. They learnt to lodge and maintain themselves in a manner the best adapted to their change of situation. They retained the customs of their education, and every thing that could agree with the natural effects of the air they breathed. With these they carried into America the food and customs of Europe, and familiarised to each other beings and pro-

ductions which nature had separated by an interval of the same extent as a zone. But of all the primitive customs, the most salutary, perhaps, was that of mingling and dividing the two races by intermarriages.

All nations, even the least civilized, have proscribed an union of sexes between the children of the same family ; whether it was that experience or prejudice dictated this law, or chance led them to it. Beings brought up together in infancy, accustomed to see one another continually, in this mutual familiarity rather contract that indifference which arises from habit, than that lively and impetuous sensation of sympathy which suddenly affects two beings who never saw one another. If, in the savage life, hunger disunites families, love undoubtedly must have reunited them. The history, whether true or fabulous, of the rape of the Sabine women, shews that marriage was the first alliance between nations. Thus the blood will have become gradually intermixed, either by the casual meetings occasioned by a wandering life, or by the conventions and agreements of settled communities. The natural advantage of crossing the breed among men, as well as animals, in order to preserve the species from degenerating, is the result of slow experience, and is posterior to the acknowledged utility of uniting families, in order to cement the peace of society. Tyrants soon discovered how far it was proper for them to separate, or connect their subjects, in order to keep them in a state of dependence. They formed men into separate ranks, by availing themselves of their prejudices ; because this line of division between them became a bond of submission to the sovereign, who maintained his authority by their mutual hatred and opposition. They connected families to each other in every station, because this union totally extinguished every spark of dissension repugnant to the spirit of civil society. Thus the intermixture of pedigrees and families by marriage, hath been rather the result of political institutions, than formed upon the views of nature.

But whatever be the natural principle and moral tendency of this custom, it was adopted by Europeans, who were desirous of multiplying in the islands. The greatest part of them either married in their own country before they removed into the New World, or with those who landed

there. The European married a creole, or the creole an European, whom chance or family connections brought into America. From this happy association hath been formed a peculiar character, which in the two worlds distinguishes the man born under the sky of the New, from parents originally natives of both. The marks of this character will be pointed out with so much the more certainty, as they are taken from the writings of an accurate observer, from whom we have already drawn some particulars respecting natural history.

The creoles are in general well made. There is scarce a single person among them afflicted with those deformities which are so common in other climates. They have all an extreme suppleness in their limbs; whether it is to be attributed to a particular organization adapted to hot countries, to the custom of their being reared without the confinement of swaddling clothes and stays, or to the exercises they are habituated to from their infancy. Their complexion, however, never has that air of vivacity and freshness, which contributes more to beauty than regular features do. As to their colour, when they are in health, it resembles that of persons just recovering from a fit of illness; but this lived complexion, more or less dark, is nearly that of our southern people.

Their intrepidity in war hath been signalized by a series of bold actions. There would be no better soldiers, if they were more capable of being disciplined.

History does not afford any of those instances of cowardice, treachery, and meanness among them, which fully the annals of all nations. It can hardly be alleged that a creole ever did a mean action.

All strangers, without exception, find in the islands the most friendly and generous hospitality. This useful virtue is practised with a degree of ostentation, which shews, at least, the honour they attach to it. Their natural propensity to beneficence banishes avarice; and the creoles are generous in their dealings.

They are strangers to dissimulation, craft, and suspicion. The pride they take in their frankness, the opinion they have of themselves, together with their extreme vivacity, exclude from their commercial transactions all that mystery and reserve which stifles natural goodness of disposition,

extinguishes the social spirit, and diminishes our sensibility.

A warm imagination, incapable of any restraint, renders them independent and inconstant in their taste. It perpetually hurries them with fresh ardour into pleasures, to which they sacrifice both their fortune and their whole existence.

A remarkable degree of penetration, a quick facility in seizing all ideas, and expressing themselves with vivacity ; the power of combining, added to the talent of observation ; a happy mixture of all the qualities of the mind and of the heart, which render men capable of the greatest actions, will make them attempt every thing when oppression compels them to it.

The sharp and saline air of the Caribbee islands deprives the women of that lively colour which is the beauty of their sex. But they have an agreeable and fair complexion, which does not deprive the eyes of all that vivacity and power that enables them to convey into the soul such strong impressions as are irresistible. As they are extremely sober, they drink nothing but chocolate, coffee, and such spiritous liquors as restore to the organs their tone and vigour, enervated by the climate ; while the men are continually drinking in proportion to the heat that exhausts them.

They are very prolific, and often mothers of ten or twelve children. This fertility arises from love, which strongly attaches them to their husbands ; but which also throws them instantly into the arms of another, whenever death hath dissolved the union of a first or second marriage.

Jealous even to distraction, they are seldom unfaithful. That indolence which makes them neglect the means of pleasing, the taste which the men have for negro women, their particular manner of life, whether private or public, which precludes the opportunities or temptations to gallantry ; these are the best supports of the virtue of these females.

The solitary kind of manner in which they live in their houses, gives them an air of extreme timidity, which embarrasses them in their intercourse with the world. They lose, even in early life, the spirit of emulation and choice ; and this prevents them from cultivating the agreeable ta-

lents of education. They seem to have neither power nor taste for any thing but dancing, which undoubtedly transports and animates them to higher pleasures. This instinct of pleasure attends them through their whole life ; whether it be, that they still retain some share of their youthful sensibility, or are stimulated with the recollection of it ; or from other reasons which are unknown to us.

From such a constitution arises an extremely sensible and sympathising character, so that they cannot even bear the sight of misery ; though they are, at the same time, rigid and severe with respect to the offices they require of those domestics that are attached to their service. More despotic and inexorable towards their slaves than the men themselves, they feel no remorse in ordering chastisements, the severity of which would be a punishment and a lesson to them, if they were obliged to inflict them themselves, or were witnesses to them.

This slavery of the negroes is, perhaps, the cause from whence the creoles in part derive a certain character, which makes them appear strange, fantastic, and of an intercourse not much relished in Europe. From their earliest infancy they are accustomed to see a number of tall and stout men about them, whose business it is to conjecture and anticipate their wishes. This first view must immediately inspire them with the most extravagant opinion of themselves. Seldom meeting with any opposition to their caprice, though ever so unreasonable, they assume a spirit of presumption, tyranny, and disdain, for a great part of mankind. Nothing is more insolent than the man who always lives with his inferiors ; but when these happen to be slaves, habituated to wait upon children, to dread even their cries, which must expose them to punishment, what must masters become who have never obeyed ; wicked men, who have never been punished ; and madmen, who are used to put their fellow-creatures in irons ?

So cruel an example of dependence gives the Americans that pride which must necessarily be detested in Europe, where a greater equality prevailing among men, teaches them a greater share of mutual respect. Educated without knowing either pain or labour, they are neither able to surmount difficulties nor bear contradiction. Nature hath given them every advantage, and fortune refused them no-

thing. In this respect, like most kings, they are unhappy, because they have never experienced adversity. If the climate did not strongly excite them to love, they would be ignorant of every real pleasure of the soul: and yet they seldom have the happiness of forming an idea of those passions, which, thwarted by obstacles and refusals, are nourished with tears and gratified with virtue. If they were not confined by the laws of Europe, which govern them by their wants, and repress or restrain the extraordinary degree of independence they enjoy, they would fall into a softness and effeminacy, which would in time render them the victims of their own tyranny, or would involve them in a state of anarchy, that would subvert all the foundations of their community.

But if they once ceased to have negroes for slaves, and kings who live at a distance from them for masters, they, perhaps, would become the most astonishing people that ever appeared on earth. The spirit of liberty which they would imbibe from their earliest infancy; the understanding and abilities which they would inherit from Europe; the activity, which the necessity of repelling numerous enemies would inspire; the large colonies they would have to form; the rich commerce they would have to found on an immense cultivation; the ranks and societies they would have to create; and the maxims, laws, and manners, they would have to establish on the principles of reason: all these springs of action would, perhaps, make of an equivocal and miscellaneous race of people, the most flourishing nation that philosophy and humanity could wish for the happiness of the world.

If ever any fortunate revolution should take place in the world, it will begin in America. After having experienced such devastation, this New World must flourish in its turn, and, perhaps, command the Old. It will become the asylum of our people who have been oppressed by political establishments or driven away by war. The savage inhabitants will be civilized, and oppressed strangers will become free. But it is necessary that this change should be preceded by conspiracies, commotions, and calamities; and that a hard and laborious education should predispose their minds both to act and to suffer.

Young creoles, come into Europe to exercise and prac-

tise what we teach you ; there to collect, in the valuable remains of our ancient manners, that vigour which we have lost ; there to study our weakness, and draw from our follies themselves those lessons of wisdom which produce great events ; leave in America your negroes, whose condition distresses us, and whose blood, perhaps, is mingled in all those ferments which alter, corrupt, and destroy our population. Fly from an education of tyranny, effeminacy, and vice, which you contract from the habit of living with slaves, whose degraded station inspires you with none of those elevated and virtuous sentiments, which can only give rise to a people that will become celebrated. America hath poured all the sources of corruption on Europe. To complete its vengeance, it must draw from it all the instruments of its prosperity. As it hath been destroyed by our crimes, it must be renewed by our vices.

Nature seems to have destined the Americans to a greater share of happiness than the inhabitants of Europe. They have scarce any illness, except inflammations in the lungs, and pleurifies, which are almost as common in the islands as in all other regions, where the transitions from heat to cold are frequent and sudden. The gout, gravel, stone, apoplexies, and a multitude of other scourges of the human race, which are so fatal in other countries, have never made the least ravages there. If the air of the country can be withstood, and the middle age be attained to, this is sufficient to insure a long and happy life. There old age is not weak, languishing, and beset with those infirmities which affect it in our climate.

Diseases to which the Europeans are subject in the islands of America.

IN the Caribbee islands, however, new-born infants are attacked with a disease which seems peculiar to the torrid zone ; it is called *tetanos*. If a child receive the impression of the air or wind, if the room where it is just born be exposed to smoke, to too much heat or cold, the disorder shews itself immediately. It first seizes the jaw, which becomes rigid and fixed, so as not to be opened. This spasm soon communicates itself to the other parts of the body ; and the child dies for want of being able to take nourishment. If it escape this danger, which threatens the nine first days of its

existence, it has nothing to fear. The indulgences which are allowed to children before they are weaned, which is at the end of the twelve months, such as the use of coffee, chocolate, wine, but especially sugar and sweetmeats; these indulgences that are so pernicious to our children, are offered to those of America by nature, which accustoms them in early age to the productions of their climate.

The fair sex, naturally weak and delicate, has its infirmities as well as its charms. In the islands they are subject to a weakness, an almost total decay of their strength; an unconquerable aversion for all kind of wholesome food, and an irregular craving after every thing that is prejudicial to their health. Salt or spiced food is what they only relish and desire. This disease is a true cachexy, which commonly degenerates into a dropsy. It is attributed to the diminution of the menses in those women who come from Europe, and to the weakness or total suppression of that periodical discharge in creoles. It might still more properly be attributed to the excessive heat, and the immoderate dampness of the climate, which at length destroys every spring in the animal economy.

The men, more robust, are liable to more violent complaints. In this vicinity of the equator, they are exposed to a hot and malignant fever, known under different names, and indicated by hæmorrhages. The blood, which is boiling under the fervent rays of the sun, is discharged from the nose, eyes, and other parts of the body. Nature, in temperate climates, does not move with such rapidity, but that in the most acute disorders there is time to observe and follow the course she takes. In the islands, her progress is so rapid, that if we delay to attack the disorder as soon as it appears, its effects are certainly fatal. No sooner is a person seized with sickness, but the physician, the lawyer, and the priest, are all called to his bed-side.

The symptoms of this terrible illness seem to indicate the necessity of bleeding. This operation hath therefore been repeated without measure. Several experiments have at length demonstrated that this expedient was fatal. Remedies are now preferred which are capable of moderating this great rarefaction of the blood, and which tend to the dissolution of it, such as bathing, glysters, oxycrate, and even blisters, when the disorder is attended with delirium. We

have known a professional-man of great understanding, who thought that the immediate cause of this malady was the intense heat of the sun; and who affirmed, that those who did not expose themselves to it, most commonly escaped this calamity.

Most of those who survive these attacks recover very slowly and with difficulty. Several fall into an habitual languor, occasioned by the debility of the whole machine, which the noxious air of the country, and the little nourishment their food supplies, are not able to restore. Hence obstructions, jaundice, and swellings of the spleen, are produced, which sometimes terminate in dropsies.

Almost all the Europeans who go over to America are exposed to this danger, and frequently the creoles themselves, on their return from more temperate climates. But it never attacks women whose blood has the natural evacuations, and negroes, who, born under a hotter climate, are inured by nature, and prepared by free perspiration, for all the ferments that the sun can produce.

These violent fevers are certainly owing to the heat of the sun, the rays of which are less oblique, and more constant, than in our climates. This heat must undoubtedly thicken the blood, through the excess of perspiration, a want of elasticity in the solids, and a dilatation of the vessels by the impulse of the fluids, whether in proportion to the rarefaction of the air, or the less degree of compression which the surface of the bodies is exposed to in a rarefied atmosphere.

Far from having recourse to these expedients, which are known to be preventives of the disorder, the inhabitants fall into such excesses are most likely to hasten and increase it. The strangers who arrive at the Caribbee islands, are excited by the entertainments they are invited to, the pleasures they partake of, and the kind reception they meet with; every thing induces them to an immoderate indulgence in all the pleasures which custom renders less prejudicial to those who are born under this climate. Feasting, dancing, gaming, late hours, wine, cordials, and frequently the chagrin of disappointment in their chimerical expectations, conspire to add to the ferment of an immoderate heat of the blood, which soon becomes inflamed.

With such indulgence, it is scarce possible to resist the

heats of this climate, when even the greatest precautions are not sufficient to secure persons from the attack of those dangerous fevers; when the most sober and moderate men, who are the most averse from every kind of excess, and the most careful of all their actions, are victims to the new air they breathe. In the present state of the colonies, of ten men that go into the islands, four English die, three French, three Dutch, three Danes, and one Spaniard.

When it was observed how many men were lost in these regions, at the time they were first occupied, it was generally thought, that the states who had the ambition of settling there would be depopulated in the end.

EXPERIENCE hath altered the public opinion upon this point. In proportion as these colonies have extended their plantations, they have had fresh means of expence. These have opened to their mother country new sources of consumption.

Advantages of those nations that are in possession of the American islands.

The increase in exportations could not take place without an increase of labour. These labours have brought together a greater number of men, which will ever be the case when the means of subsistence are multiplied. Even foreigners have resorted in great multitudes to those kingdoms, which opened a vast field to their ambition and industry.

Population hath not only increased among the proprietors of the islands, but the people have also become more happy. Our felicity in general is proportioned to our conveniences, and it must increase as we can vary and extend them. The islands have been productive of this advantage to their possessors. They have drawn from these fertile regions a number of commodities, the consumption of which hath added to their enjoyments. They have acquired some, which, when exchanged for others among their neighbours, have made them partake of the luxuries of other climates. In this manner, the kingdoms which have acquired the possession of the islands, by fortunate circumstances, or by well-combined projects, are become the residence of the arts, and of all the polite amusements which are a natural and necessary consequence of great plenty.

But this is not the only advantage : these colonies have raised the nations that founded them, to a superiority of influence in the political world, by the following means : Gold and silver, which form the general circulation of Europe, come from Mexico, Peru, and Brazil. They belong neither to the Spaniards nor the Portuguese, but to people who give their merchandize in exchange for these metals. These people have commercial transactions with each other, that are ultimately settled at Lisbon and Cadiz, which may be looked upon as a common and universal repository. It is in these places that one must judge of the increase or decline of the trade of each nation. That nation, whose accounts of sale and purchase are kept in balance with the rest, receives the whole interest of its capital. That which hath purchased more than it hath sold, withdraws less than its interest ; because it hath ceded a part of it, in order to satisfy the demands of the nation to which it was indebted : that which hath sold more to other nations than it hath purchased of them, does not only get what was owing from Spain and Portugal, but also the profit it hath derived from other nations with which it hath made exchanges. This last advantage is peculiar to the people who possess the islands. Their specie is annually increased by the sale of the valuable productions of these countries ; and the augmentation of their specie confirms their superiority, and renders them the arbiters of peace and war. But we shall explain, in the following books, how far each nation hath increased its power by the possession of the islands.

BOOK XII.

SETTLEMENTS OF THE SPANIARDS, THE DUTCH, AND
THE DANES, IN THE AMERICAN ISLANDS.

I WAS going to say, that Spain had *Definition of*
the glory of having discovered the *true glory.*
great archipelago of America, and of
having formed the first settlements there, when I was check-
ed by the consideration, that the discovery of it could not
possibly have been glorious to the Spaniards, unless it had
been advantageous to the Antilles.

Glory is a sentiment which raises us in our own eyes, and
which increases our consideration among enlightened men.
The idea of it is inseparably connected with those of a great
difficulty overcome, of great utility subsequent to success,
and of equal increase of felicity for the universe or for one's
country. Whatever mark of genius I may acknowledge
in the invention of any destructive weapon, I should excite
a just indignation, were I to say, that such a man, or such
a nation, had the glory of having invented it. Glory, at
least according to the ideas I have formed of it, is not the
reward of the greatest success in the sciences. If you in-
vent a new calculation, compose a sublime poem, or if you
have excelled Cicero or Demosthenes in eloquence, Thucy-
dides or Tacitus in history, celebrity may be granted to
you, but not glory. Neither is it any more to be obtained
by the superiority of talents in the arts. Let us suppose,
that from the block of marble you have cut out either the
Gladiator, or the Apollo Belvidere; that your pencil hath
painted the transfiguration; or that your simple, expressive,
and melodious airs have equalled you with Pergolesi; you
will then enjoy a high reputation, but no glory. I will go
further: if you should equal Vauban in the art of fortifi-
cation, Turenne and Condé in that of commanding armies;
if you should gain battles, and conquer provinces, all these
actions are undoubtedly great, and your name will be trans-
mitted to the remotest posterity, but glory is reserved for
other qualities. We do not acquire glory by adding to
that of our nation. A man may be the honour of his

corps, without being the glory of his country. A private man may aspire to reputation, to fame, and to immortality ; but there are none but rare circumstances, and a fortunate hazard, that can conduct him to glory.

Glory belongs to God in heaven. Upon earth, it is the lot of virtue, and not of genius ; of useful, great, beneficent, splendid, and heroic virtue. It is the lot of the monarch, who, throughout the course of a tumultuous reign, hath attended to the happiness of his subjects, and hath attended to it with success. It is the lot of a subject, who shall have sacrificed his life for the preservation of his fellow-citizens. It is the lot of a people, who shall have chosen rather to die free, than to live enslaved. It is the lot, not of a Cæsar or of a Pompey, but of a Regulus or of a Cato. It is the lot of a Henry IV.

It is owing to the spirit of humanity which philosophy hath infused into the minds of all enlightened people, that conquerors, as well ancient as modern, are now put upon a level with the most abhorred class of mankind. And I doubt not but that posterity, which will judge with impartiality of the discoveries we have made in the New World, will rank our navigators still below them. For, have they been guided by their regard for the human race, or by cupidity ? And though an enterprise be in itself a good one, can it be laudable, if the motive of it be vicious ?

*Idea that must be
formed of the
island of
Trinidad.*

THE island which the Spaniards first met with on their arrival in America, is called Trinidad. Columbus landed on it in 1498, when he discovered the Oroonoko ; but other objects interfering, both the island, and the coasts of the neighbouring continent, were at that time neglected.

It was not till 1535, that the court of Madrid took possession of the island of Trinidad, which is situated facing the mouth of the Oroonoko, as it were to moderate the rapidity of this river. It is said to comprehend three hundred and eighteen square leagues. It hath never experienced any hurricane, and its climate is wholesome. The rains are very abundant there from the middle of May to the end of October : and the dryness that prevails throughout the rest of the year is not attended with any inconvenience, because

the country, though destitute of navigable rivers, is very well watered. The earthquakes are more frequent than dangerous. In the interior part of the island there are four groups of mountains, which, together with some others formed by nature upon the shores of the ocean, occupy a third part of the territory. The rest is in general susceptible of the richest cultures.

The form of the island is square. To the north is a coast of twenty-two leagues in extent, too much elevated, and too much divided, ever to be of any use. The eastern coast is only nineteen leagues in extent, but in all parts as convenient as one could wish it to be. The southern coast hath five-and-twenty leagues, is a little exalted, and adapted for the successful cultivation of coffee and cacao. The land on the western side is separated from the rest of the colony, to the south by the Soldiers-Canal, and to the north by the Dragons-Mouth, and forms, by means of a recess, a harbour of twenty leagues in breadth and thirty in depth. It offers in all seasons a secure asylum to the navigators, who, during the greatest part of the year, would find it difficult to anchor anywhere else, except at the place called the Galiote.

In this part are the Spanish settlements. They consist only of the port of Spain, upon which there are seventy-eight thatched huts; and of Saint Joseph, situated three leagues further up the country, where eighty families, still more wretched than the former, are computed.

The cacao was formerly cultivated near these two villages. Its excellence made it be preferred even to that of Caraccas. In order to secure it the merchants used to pay for it beforehand. The trees that produced it perished all in 1727, and have not been replanted since. The monks attributed this disaster to the colonists having refused to pay the tithes. Those who were not blinded by interest or superstition, ascribed it to the north winds, which have too frequently occasioned the same kind of calamity in other parts. Since this period, Trinidad hath not been much more frequented than Cubagua.

THIS little island, at the distance of four leagues only from the continent, was discovered, and neglected, by Columbus, in 1498. The Spaniards, being afterwards
Vol. II.

*Account of
Cubagua, and
of its pearls.*

informed that its shores contained great treasures, repaired to it in multitudes in 1509, and gave it the name of Pearl Island.

The pearl is a hard shining body, more or less white, commonly of a round form, and which is found in some shells, but more frequently in that which is known by the name of mother-of-pearl. This rich production of nature is mostly attached to the inside of the shell; but it is most perfect when found in the animal itself, which lives in the shell.

The ancients were in an error with respect to the origin of the pearl, as well as with regard to many other phenomena, which we have observed and understood better, and which we have explained more satisfactorily. Let us not despise them the more on this account, neither let us be more vain. Their mistakes sometimes display a degree of sagacity, and have not been entirely useless to us. They have been the first steps of science, which time, the efforts of human genius, and a number of fortunate and casual circumstances, were to improve. Attempts have been made to tear the veil that covers nature, before it was lifted up.

The Greeks and the Romans used to say, that the shell-fish raised itself every morning to the surface of the waters, and received the dew, which was changed into pearl. This agreeable idea hath shared the fate of numberless fables of the same kind, when the spirit of observation had made it known, that this shell-fish remained always at the bottom of the sea, or fixed to the rocks where it had been formed; and when sound philosophy had demonstrated, that it was impossible it should be otherwise.

It hath since been imagined, that pearls must be the eggs, or the sperm of the fish inclosed in the shell. But this idea hath likewise fallen into discredit, when it hath been fully known, that the pearls were found in all parts of the animal; and when, after the most accurate investigations, anatomy hath not been able to discover the organs calculated for generation in this fish, which seems to add one to the class of hermaphroditical animals.

At length, after a variety of systems lightly adopted, and successively abandoned, it hath been imagined that pearls were produced from a disease in the animal; and

that they were formed by a liquor extravasated from some vessels, and detained between the membranes, or spread along the interior surface of the shell. This conjecture hath been still more confirmed to accurate observers, in proportion as it hath been ascertained that these treasures were not to be found indiscriminately in all the fish; that those which had them were not so well tasted as the others; and that the coasts upon which this rich fishery was carried on were in general unwholesome.

Black pearls, such as are inclining to black, or such as are of a lead colour, are universally despised. In Arabia, and in some other parts of the east, the yellow pearls are esteemed. But the white ones are preferred in Europe, and throughout the greatest part of the globe. It is regretted only that they begin to grow yellow after half a century.

Although pearls had been discovered in the seas of the East Indies and in those of America, yet their price was sufficiently kept up to induce people to counterfeit them. The imitation was at first coarse. It was glass covered with mercury. Attempts have been repeated, and in process of time, nature hath been so well copied, that it was easy to be misled. The artificial pearls, which are made at present with wax and ichthyocol, have much the advantage of the others. They are cheap; and are made of every size and shape, to suit the women who use them for ornament.

This discovery was unknown when the Spaniards settled at Cubagua. They arrived there with some savages of the Lucaya islands, who had not been found proper for the labours of the mines, but who had the faculty of remaining a long time under water with great ease. This talent procured to their oppressors a great quantity of pearls. These pearls were not spoiled, as those had been which had been hitherto collected by the Americans, who were only acquainted with the mode of fire for opening the shell that contained them. They were preserved in all their beauty, and found an advantageous mart. But this success was momentary. The pearl bank was soon exhausted; and the colony was transferred, in 1524, to Margareta, where the regretted riches were found, and from whence they disappeared almost as soon.

Ideas respecting YET this last settlement, which is fifteen
Margaretta. leagues in length and five in breadth, was
 not abandoned. It is almost continually
 covered with thick fogs, although nature hath not bestowed
 upon it any current waters. There is no village in it except
 Mon Padre, which is defended by a small fort. Its soil would
 be fruitful if it were cultivated.

It was almost generally supposed, that the court of Madrid, in preserving Margaretta and Trinidad, meant rather to keep off rival nations from this continent, than to derive any advantage from them. At present we are induced to think otherwise. Convinced that the archipelago of America was full of inhabitants loaded with debts, or who possessed but a small quantity of indifferent land, the council of Charles III hath offered great concessions, in these two islands, to those who should embrace their faith. The freedom of commerce with all the Spanish traders was insured to them. They were only obliged to deliver their cacao to the company of Caraccas, but at twenty-seven sols [about 1s. 1½d.] per pound, and under the condition that this company should advance them some capital. These overtures have only met with a favourable reception at Granada, from whence some Frenchmen have made their escape with a few slaves, either to screen themselves from the pursuits of their creditors, or from aversion to the sway of the English. In every other part, they have had no effect, whether from aversion for an oppressive government, or whether it be that the expectations of all are at present turned towards the north of the New World.

Trinidad and Margaretta are at present inhabited only by a few Spaniards, who, with some Indian women, have formed a race of men, who, uniting the indolence of the savage to the vices of civilized nations, are sluggards, cheats, and zealots. They live upon maize, upon what fish they catch, and upon bananas, which nature, out of indulgence as it were to their slothfulness, produces there of a larger size, and better quality, than in any other part of the archipelago. They have a breed of lean and tasteless cattle, with which they carry on a fraudulent traffic to the French colonies, exchanging them for camblets, black veils, linen, silk stockings, white hats, and hard-ware. The number

of their vessels does not exceed thirty sloops, without decks.

The tame animals of these two islands have filled the woods with a breed of horned cattle, which are become wild. The inhabitants shoot them, and cut their flesh into slips of three inches in breadth and one in thickness, which they dry, after having melted the fat out of them, so that they will keep three or four months. This provision, which is called tassajo, is sold in the French settlements for twenty livres [16s. 8d.] a hundred weight.

All the money which the government sends to these two islands, falls into the hands of the commandants, the officers civil and military, and the monks. The remainder of the people, who do not amount to more than sixteen hundred, live in a state of the most deplorable poverty. In time of war they furnish about two hundred men, who, for the sake of plunder, offer themselves, without distinction, to any of the colonies that happen to be fitting out cruizers for sea. The inhabitants of Porto-Rico are of a different turn.

ALTHOUGH this island had been discovered and visited by Columbus in 1493, the Spaniards neglected it till 1509, when the thirst of gold brought them thither from St. Domingo, under the command of Ponce de Leon, to make a conquest, which afterwards cost them dear.

*Conquest of
Porto-Rico by
the Spaniards.*

It is generally known, that the use of poisoned arms is of the highest antiquity. In most countries, it preceded the invention of steel. When darts headed with stones, bones of fish or other animals, proved insufficient to repel the attacks of wild beasts, men had recourse to poisonous juices, which, from being originally designed merely for the chase, were afterwards employed in the wars of conquering or savage people against their own species. Ambition and revenge set no limits to their outrages, till ages had been spent in drowning whole nations in rivers of blood. When it was discovered that this effusion of blood produced no advantage, and that, in proportion as the stream swelled in its course, it depopulated countries, and left nothing but deserts without animation and without culture; they then

came to an agreement to moderate, in some degree, the thirst of shedding it. They established what are called the laws of war; that is to say, injustice in injustice, or the interest of kings in the massacre of the people. They do not now cut the throats of all their victims at once; but reserve some few of the herd to propagate the breed. These laws of war, or of nations, required the abolition of certain abuses in the art of killing. Where fire-arms are to be had, poisoned weapons are forbidden; and, when cannon balls will answer the end, chewed bullets are not allowed. O! race, unworthy both of heaven or earth, destructive, tyrannical being, man, or devil rather, wilt thou never cease to torment this globe, where thou existest but for a moment? Will thy wars never end but with the annihilation of thy species? Go then; if thou wouldst advance thy mischief, go and provide thyself with the poisons of the New World.

Of all the regions productive of venomous plants, none abounded so much in them as South America, which owed this malignant fertility to a soil in general rank, as if it were purging itself from the slime of a deluge.

The plants called lianes, of which there were vast numbers in all damp and marshy places, furnished the poison, which was in universal request on the continent. The method of preparing it was by cutting them in pieces, then boiling them in water, till the liquor had acquired the consistence of a syrup. After this, they dipped their arrows in it, which were immediately impregnated with the poisonous quality. During several ages, the savages in general used these arms in their wars with each other. At length many of those nations, from the deficiency of their numbers, found the necessity of renouncing so destructive a weapon, and reserved it for beasts, whether large or small, which they could not overtake or overcome. Any animal, whose skin has been raised with one of these poisoned arrows, dies a minute after, without any sign of convulsion or pain. This is not occasioned by the coagulation of the blood, which was a long time the general opinion; recent experiments have proved, that this poison, mixed with blood newly drawn and warm, prevents it from coagulating, and even preserves it some time from putrefaction. It is probable, that the effect of these juices is upon the nervous sys-

tem. Some travellers have imputed the origin of the venereal disease, among the inhabitants of the New World, to the habit of eating game killed with these poisoned arms. At present it is universally known, that the flesh of such animals may be eaten for a continuance without any ill effect.

In the American islands, the natives draw their poison from trees, more than from the lianes; and of all the venomous sorts of trees, the most deadly is the manche-neel.

This tree is rather lofty, and usually grows by the water side. It hath the figure and leaves of the pear tree. Its trunk, which is of a compact, heavy, veiny wood, fit for joiners work, is covered with a smooth and tender bark. It bears two species of flowers. Some are male, and disposed in catkins at the extremity of the branches. They have in each calix but one thread surmounted with two antheræ. The female flowers are single. Their pistil becomes a straight fleshy fruit, of the form of a fig or a pear, and containing a very hard kernel, in which are five or six seeds in so many different cells. In all parts of the tree, and especially between the trunk and the bark, a milky juice is found, which is considered as a very subtle poison, and which renders the cultivation of this tree, and even the coming near to it, very dangerous. One cannot sleep with impunity under the shade of it, and the water which drops from its leaves after a shower, raises blisters upon the skin, and excites a troublesome itching. The juice of the manche-neel is received into shells, placed under various incisions that have been made in its trunk. As soon as this juice is grown a little thick, the points of the arrows are steeped in it, which acquire from thence the property of conveying sudden death, be the wound ever so slight. This poison, as it appears from experience, preserves its venomous quality above a hundred years. Of all the spots where this fatal tree is found, Porto-Rico is that in which it delights most, and where it is found in the greatest abundance. Why were not the first conquerors of America all shipwrecked on this island? It is the misfortune of both worlds that they became acquainted with it so late, and that they did not there meet with the death which their avarice merited.

The mancheneel seems to have been fatal only to the Americans. The inhabitants of the island where it grows, used it to repel the Caribs who made frequent descents on their coasts. The same arms they might have employed against the Europeans; and, as the Spaniards were ignorant at that time that salt, applied immediately, is an infallible cure, they would probably have fallen a sacrifice to the first effects of this poison. But they did not meet with the least resistance from the savage inhabitants of the island. These had been informed of what had occurred in the conquest of the neighbouring isles; and they regarded these strangers as a superior order of beings, to whose chains they voluntarily submitted themselves. It was not long, however, before they wished to shake off the intolerable yoke which had been imposed on them, and postponed the enterprise only till they could be assured whether their tyrants were immortal. A cacique, named Broyoan, was intrusted with this commission.

Chance favoured his design, by bringing to him Salzedo, a young Spaniard, who was travelling. He received him with great respect, and at his departure sent some Indians to attend him on his way, and to serve him in the quality of guides. When they came to the bank of a river, which they were to pass, one of these savages took him on his shoulder to carry him over. As soon as they had got into the midst of it, he threw him into the water, and, with the assistance of his companions, kept him there till there was no appearance of life. They then dragged him to the bank, but, as they were still in doubt whether he was dead or living, they begged pardon a thousand times for the accident that had happened. This farce lasted three days; till at length being convinced, by the stench of the corpse, that it was possible for Spaniards to die, the Indians rose on all sides upon their oppressors, and massacred a hundred of them.

Ponce de Leon immediately assembled all the Castilians who had escaped, and, without loss of time, fell upon the savages, who were terrified with this sudden attack. In proportion as the number of their enemies increased, their panic became more violent. They had even the folly to believe, that these Spaniards, which were just arrived from

St. Domingo, were the same that had been killed, and were come to life again to fight them. Under this ridiculous persuasion, dreading to continue a war with men who revive after their death, they submitted once more to the yoke, and being condemned to the mines, in a short time fell victims to the toils of slavery.

PORTO-RICO hath thirty-six leagues in length, eighteen in breadth, and one hundred in circumference. We may venture to affirm, that it is one of the best, if not entirely the best, of the islands of the New World, in proportion to its extent. The air is wholesome, and tolerably temperate, and it is watered by the pure streams of a considerable number of small rivulets. Its mountains are covered with either useful or valuable trees, and its valleys have a degree of fertility seldom to be met with elsewhere. All the productions peculiar to America thrive upon this deep soil. A safe port, commodious harbours, and coasts of easy access, are added to these several advantages.

On this territory, deprived of its savage inhabitants by ferocious deeds, the memory of which three centuries have not been able to obliterate, was successively formed a population of forty-four thousand eight hundred and eighty-three men, either white or of a mixed race. Most of them were naked. Their habitations were nothing more than huts. Nature, with little or no assistance, supplied them with subsistence. The linens, and some other things of little value, which they clandestinely obtained from the neighbouring or from foreign islands, were paid for by the colony with tobacco, cattle, and with the money which was sent by government for the support of the civil, religious, and military establishment. They received from the mother country, annually, only one small vessel, the cargo of which did not amount to more than ten thousand crowns [1,250*l.*] and which returned to Europe laden with hides.

Such was Porto-Rico, when, in 1765, the court of Madrid carried their attention to St. John, an excellent harbour, even for the royal navy, and which only wants a little more extent. The town which commands it, was

surrounded with fortifications. The works were made particularly strong towards a narrow and marshy neck of land, the only place by which the town can be attacked on the land side. Two battalions, and one company of artillery, crossed the sea for its defence.

At this period, a possession which had annually received from the treasury no more than 378,000 [15,750*l.*] cost them 2,634,433 livres [109,768*l.* 10*s.*] which sum was regularly brought from Mexico. This increase of specie stimulated the colonists to undertake some labours. At the same time, the island, which till then had been under the yoke of monopoly, was allowed to receive all Spanish navigators. These two circumstances united, imparted some degree of animation to a settlement, the languishing state of which astonished all nations. Its tithes, which before 1765 did not yield more than 81,000 livres [3,375*l.*] have increased to 230,418 livres [9,680*l.* 15*s.*]

On the first of January 1778, the population of Porto-Rico amounted to fourscore thousand six hundred and sixty inhabitants, of which number only six thousand five hundred and thirty were slaves. The inhabitants reckoned seventy-seven thousand three hundred and eighty-four head of horned cattle, twenty-three thousand one hundred and ninety-five horses, fifteen hundred and fifteen mules, and forty-nine thousand fifty-eight head of small cattle.

The plantations, the number of which were five thousand six hundred and eighty-one, produced two thousand seven hundred and thirty-seven quintals of sugar; eleven hundred and fourteen quintals of cotton; eleven thousand one hundred and sixty-three quintals of coffee; nineteen thousand five hundred and fifty-six quintals of rice; fifteen thousand two hundred and sixteen quintals of maize; seven thousand four hundred and fifty-eight quintals of tobacco; and nine thousand eight hundred and sixty quintals of melasses.

The cattle in the several pasture grounds, which were two hundred and thirty-four in number, produced annually eleven thousand three hundred and sixty-four oxen; four thousand three hundred and thirty-four horses; nine hundred and fifty-two mules; thirty-one thousand two hundred and fifty-four head of small cattle.

ALL this is very trifling; but great expectations are raised from an arrangement which hath lately been made. No one citizen of Porto-Rico was in reality master of his possessions. The commanders who had succeeded each other, had only granted the income of them. This inconceivable defect hath at length been remedied. The proprietors hath been confirmed in their possessions, by a law of 14th of January 1778, upon condition of paying annually one real and a quarter, or sixteen sols six deniers [$8\frac{1}{2}$ d.] for every portion of ground of twenty-five thousand seven hundred and eight toises, which they employed in cultures; and three quarters of a real, or ten sols one denier and a half [rather above 5d.] for that part of the soil that is reserved for pasture ground. This easy tribute is to serve for the clothing of the militia, composed of one thousand nine hundred infantry, and two hundred and fifty cavalry. The remainder of the island is distributed on the same conditions to those who have little or no property. These last, who are distinguished by the name of *agregés*, are seven thousand eight hundred and thirty-five in number.

Means which would render Porto-Rico flourishing.

This plan will not accomplish the revolution which is expected by the council of Spain; although, contrary to the precise determination of the laws, every colonist who chooses to establish sugar plantations, is allowed to call in the assistance of any foreigner who is able to teach him that kind of culture. These colonists ought to be authorized to sell openly to the French, the Dutch, the English, and the Danes, the cattle which they have been hitherto obliged to dispose of in a clandestine manner only.

Man suffers, only because he knows not how to put an end to his pain. If he should languish in misery, it is merely from being incapable of changing his situation. It would be a gross error to imagine, that in a state of nature we can see man in perpetual agitation, incessantly observing and making all kinds of experiments, as we see him in a civilized state. Experience hath proved, that it requires ages for him to emerge from his natural torpid state; and that when once his industry is subject to a certain invariable mode of proceeding, and from the small number of his wants, restrained within narrow and circumscribed limits, it

will never be roused of itself. What method can then be contrived to shorten the duration of his indolence, of his stupidity, and of his misery? For this purpose, he must be made acquainted with active beings, and must be placed in constant intercourse with laborious people. He will soon open his eyes with astonishment; he will soon be conscious that he likewise hath had hands given to him, and will scarce conceive how it could have been possible, that the idea of making use of them should not have occurred to him sooner. The sight of the enjoyments that are obtained by labour, will inspire him with the desire of partaking of them, and he will work. Invention is peculiar to genius, and imitation is peculiar to man. It is by imitation that all scarce things have become, and will hereafter become, common. This is the propensity which the court of Madrid ought to encourage, if not from motives of humanity, at least from the prospect of the political advantages they might expect to reap from it.

Matters perhaps might, and indeed ought to, be carried still further. Let Spain declare Porto-Rico a neutral island, and let this neutrality be acknowledged by all the powers that have any possessions in America. Let the lands, which are not yet cultivated, be granted to enterprising men of all nations, who shall have a capital sufficient to establish cultures. Let persons, lands, and productions, be exempted from all taxes for the space of fifty years, or more. Let the harbours be opened indiscriminately to all traders, free from customs, from restraints, and from formalities. Let no other troops be kept but those necessary for the police; and let these be foreign troops. Let a very plain code of laws be drawn up, suitable to a state of husbandmen, or of merchants. Let the citizens themselves be the magistrates, or the magistrates be chosen by them. Let property, that first and great basis of all political societies, be established upon unmoveable foundations. Before half a century shall be elapsed, Porto-Rico will most undoubtedly be one of the most flourishing colonies of the New World. It may then again become, without inconvenience, a truly national possession. Its abundant productions, which will have cost neither care, expence, anxiety, nor war to Spain, will increase the mass of national riches, and the public revenue.

But if even this plan of administration were the inspiration of wisdom itself; if it were dictated by the most certain views of interest; if the success of it could be geometrically proved, yet it would never be carried into execution; and for this reason: It is because it hath not been suggested by a native of Spain, and that it supposes the concurrence of foreigners. No country can do any thing of itself; and yet, from a detestable, puerile, and ridiculous, vanity, we wish to do every thing by ourselves; we are blind, and yet we will not receive light from others. In monarchical states, the way to exclude an able man from an important situation, is to anticipate, by popular choice, the appointment of the court; and this is a mode which hatred and jealousy seldom fail of employing. The same method would succeed as certainly between the respective courts. In order to prevent a minister from pursuing any wise measure, nothing more is necessary, than that another minister should assume, by divulging it, the credit of having first thought of it himself. Nothing is more scarce, than to find among ministers of the same court, one citizen, great, honest, and good enough, to pursue a project begun by his predecessor. Thus do abuses become perpetual in the nation. Thus is every thing begun, and nothing accomplished, from motives of a foolish kind of pride, the influence of which extends itself over all the branches of administration, which suspends the progress of civilization, and would have settled all nations in a state of barbarism, had their chiefs been constantly, and at all times, equally affected by it.

If, however, the measures we have ventured to propose to the court of Madrid should appear to them liable to inconveniences, which may have escaped our notice, they might at least derive from themselves part of those advantages which we should be happy to see them obtain. The navigation to the Spanish Indies is forbidden to the Biscayans. As their ports are freed, both on the going out and coming in of the ships, from the duties which are imposed upon all the other ports, the government have been apprehensive that they might obtain too great a superiority over the subjects of the monarchy, who do not enjoy the same privileges. Let Porto-Rico be opened to these active men, where their competition cannot be prejudicial to rivals who

have never attended to this trade, and the island will soon acquire some degree of importance. The same arrangement might be extended to St. Domingo.

What were the events that occasioned St. Domingo to degenerate from the splendour to which it had been raised.

THIS island, famous for being the earliest settlement of the Spaniards in the New World, was at first in high estimation for the quantity of gold it supplied. This wealth diminished with the inhabitants of the country, whom they obliged to dig it out of the bowels of the earth; and the source of it was entirely dried up, when the neighbouring islands no longer supplied the loss of those wretched victims to the avarice of the conqueror. A vehement desire of opening again this source of wealth, inspired the thought of getting slaves from Africa; but, besides that these were found unfit for the labours they were destined to, the multitude of mines, which then began to be wrought on the continent, made those of St. Domingo no longer of any importance. An idea now suggested itself, that their negroes, which were healthy, strong, and patient, might be usefully employed in husbandry; and they adopted, through necessity, a wise resolution, which, had they known their own interest, they would have embraced by choice.

The produce of their industry was at first extremely small, because the labourers were few. Charles V, who, like most sovereigns, preferred his favourites to his subjects, had granted an exclusive right of the slave trade to a Flemish nobleman, who made over his privilege to the Genoese. Those avaricious republicans conducted this infamous commerce as all monopolies are conducted; they resolved to sell dear, and they sold but little. When time and competition had fixed the natural and necessary price of slaves, the number of them increased. It may easily be imagined, that the Spaniards, who had been accustomed to treat the Indians as beasts, though they differed but little in complexion from themselves, did not entertain a higher opinion of these negro Africans, who were substituted to them. Degraded still further in their eyes by the price they had paid for them, even religion could not restrain them from aggravating the weight of their servitude. It became intolerable,

and these wretched slaves made an effort to recover the unalienable rights of mankind. Their attempt proved unsuccessful; but they reaped this benefit from their despair, that they were afterwards treated with less inhumanity.

This moderation (if tyranny, cramped by the apprehension of revolt, can deserve that name) was attended with good consequences. Cultivation was pursued with some degree of success. Soon after the middle of the sixteenth century, the mother country drew annually from this colony ten millions weight of sugar, a large quantity of wood for dying, tobacco, cocoa, cassia, ginger, cotton, and peltry in abundance. One might imagine, that such favourable beginnings would give both the desire and the means of extending this trade; but a train of events, each more fatal than the other, ruined these ships.

The first misfortune arose from the depopulation of St. Domingo. The Spanish conquests on the continent should naturally have contributed to promote the success of an island, which nature seemed to have formed to be the centre of that vast dominion arising round it, to be the staple of the different colonies: but it happened quite otherwise. On a view of the immense fortunes raising in Mexico and other parts, the richest inhabitants of St. Domingo began to despise their settlements, and quitted the true source of riches, which is, in a manner, on the surface of the earth, to go and ransack the bowels of it for veins of gold, which are soon exhausted. The government endeavoured in vain to put a stop to this emigration; the laws were always either artfully eluded or openly violated.

The weakness, which was a necessary consequence of such a conduct, leaving the coasts without defence, encouraged the enemies of Spain to ravage them. Even the capital of this island was taken and pillaged by that celebrated English sailor, Francis Drake. The cruisers of less consequence contented themselves with intercepting vessels in their passage through those latitudes, the best known at that time of any in the New World. To complete these misfortunes, the Castilians themselves commenced pirates. They attacked no ships but those of their own nation, which were more rich, worse provided, and worse defended, than any others. The custom they had of fitting out ships clandestinely, in

order to procure slaves, prevented them from being known; and the assistance they purchased from the ships of war, commissioned to protect the trade, insured to them impunity.

The foreign trade of the colony was its only resource in this distress; and that was prohibited; but as it was still carried on, notwithstanding the vigilance of the governors, or perhaps by their connivance, the policy of an exasperated and unenlightened court exerted itself in demolishing most of the sea-ports, and driving the miserable inhabitants into the inland country. This act of violence threw them into a state of dejection, which the incursions and settlement of the French on the island afterwards carried to the utmost pitch.

Spain, totally taken up with that vast empire which she had formed on the continent, used no pains to dissipate this lethargy. She even refused to listen to the solicitations of her Flemish subjects, who earnestly pressed that they might have permission to clear those fertile lands. Rather than run the risk of seeing them carry on a contraband trade on the coasts, she chose to bury in oblivion a settlement which had been of consequence, and was likely to become so again.

*Present State of
the Spanish por-
tion of St. Do-
mingo.*

THIS colony, which had no longer any intercourse with the mother country, but by a single ship of no great burthen, received from thence every third year, consisted in 1717 of eighteen thousand four hundred and ten inhabitants, including Spaniards, mestees, negroes, or mulattoes. The complexion and character of these people differed according to the different proportions of American, European, and African, blood they had received from that natural and transient union which restores all races and conditions to the same level; for love is not more a respecter of persons than death. These demi-savages, plunged in the extreme of sloth, lived upon fruits and roots, dwelt in cottages without furniture, and had most of them no clothes. The few among them, in whom indolence had not totally suppressed the sense of decency and taste for the conveniences of life, purchased clothes of their neighbours the French, in return for their

cattle, and the money sent to them for the maintenance of two hundred soldiers, the priests, and the government. The company formed at Barcelona in 1757, with exclusive privileges for the re-establishment of St. Domingo, hath had no success. Since that island hath been opened, in 1766, to all Spanish navigators, it hath still remained in the same state. The quantity of sugar canes, of coffee trees, and of tobacco, which may have been planted there, is not sufficient for its own consumption, far from being able to contribute to that of the mother country. The colony furnishes annually to the national trade no more than five or six thousand hides, and some provisions, of so little value, that they scarce deserve to be reckoned.

This deficiency of cultivation is universally felt in the island. Sant Yago, La Vega, Seibo, and other places in the inland parts, formerly so renowned for their riches, are no longer any thing more than obscure hamlets, where nothing revives the memory of their ancient splendour.

The coasts do not exhibit a more animated appearance. To the south of the colony is the narrow and deep bay of Ocoa, which might be called a harbour. It is in this place where the Spaniards have no settlements, although they are near a salt-pit which is sufficient for their necessities, that the silver which is sent from Mexico for the expences of government is deposited, and from whence it is conveyed upon horses to St. Domingo, which is at no more than fifteen leagues distance.

This famous capital of the island received for a long time its necessities directly from foreigners ; but at that period the Lozama, with which its walls are watered, was able to admit vessels of six hundred tons burthen. Since the mouth of this river hath been almost choked by the sands, and by the stones it brings away from the mountains, the town is not in a better condition than the harbour ; and magnificent ruins are the only remains of it. The country that surrounds it exhibits nothing but briars, and a small number of cattle.

The river Macouffis runs fourteen leagues above that place, where the few American vessels that come to trade in the island are used to land. They disembark their small cargoes by means of a few little islands, which afford a tolerable shelter.

Further on, but still on the same coast, the Rumana runs through the most beautiful plains that can possibly be conceived. Nevertheless, there is nothing to be found upon this extensive and fertile soil, except one hamlet, which would have a miserable appearance, even in those countries that are the most ill-treated by nature.

The north of the colony is no better than the south. Porto de Plata, the beauty and excellence of which it would be difficult to exaggerate, presents only a few huts, in its numerous creeks, and on its rich territory.

The Isabellica, which hath a beautiful river, immense plains, and forests filled with precious woods, doth not exhibit a more flourishing appearance.

With as many, or even with more, means of prosperity, Monte-Christo is nothing more than a staple, where English smugglers come habitually to take in the commodities of some French plantations, settled in the neighbourhood. The hostilities between the courts of London and Versailles render the fraudulent connections infinitely more considerable; and this mart acquires at that time a great degree of importance. But this incipient animation ceases, as soon as the ministry of Madrid think it suitable to their interests to take a part in the disputes between the two rival nations.

The Spaniards have no settlement in the western part of the island, which is entirely occupied by the French; and it is only since the last war that they have thought of settling to the eastward, which they had long entirely neglected.

The project of cultivation might be carried into execution in the plain of Vega-Real, which is situated in the inland part, and is fourscore leagues in length, by ten in its greatest breadth. It would be difficult to find, throughout the New World, a spot more level, more fruitful, or better watered. All the productions of America would succeed admirably there; but it would be impossible to remove them from thence without making roads; which is an undertaking that would alarm a people more enterprising than the Spaniards. These difficulties should naturally have led them to fix their attention on some exceeding good coasts, already a little inhabited, and where some subsistence would have been found. Probably it was apprehend-

ed that the new colonists would adopt the manners of the old, and therefore Samana was determined upon.

Samana is a peninsula, five leagues broad, and sixteen long; the soil of which, though rather uneven, is very fit for the richest productions of the New World. It hath, moreover, the advantage of affording to the ships that come from Europe, an easy landing and a safe anchorage.

These considerations induced the first adventurers from France, who ravaged St. Domingo, to settle at Samana; where they maintained their ground a long time, though surrounded by their enemies. At length it was found that they were too much exposed, and at too great a distance from the rest of the French settlements on the island, which were every day improving. In consequence of this they were recalled. The Spaniards rejoiced at their departure; but did not take possession of the spot they had quitted.

Within these few years, however, the court of Madrid have sent thither some people from the Canaries; the state have been at the expence of the voyage, of their establishment, and of their maintenance for several years. These measures, prudent as they were, have not been attended with success. The new inhabitants have for the most part fallen victims to the climate, to the clearing of the ground, undertaken without precautions, and above all, to the dishonesty of the governors, who have appropriated to themselves the funds they were intrusted with. The few that have survived so many evils, languish under the expectation of approaching death. Let us see whether the efforts made to render Cuba flourishing, have been more fortunate.

THE island of Cuba, which is separated from St. Domingo by a narrow channel, is of itself equal in value to a kingdom: it is two hundred and thirty leagues in length, and in breadth from fourteen to twenty-four. None of its rivers are navigable: in three or four of them only, the boats can go up to the height of two, four, or six leagues, during the greatest part of the year. To the north, the Havannah, Bahiabonda, Maiul, and Matanza, can receive men of war; but the southern harbours, as Cuba, Xaguas, Port au Prince,

*Conquest of the
island of Cuba
by the Spaniards.*

Bayamo, Bacacon, Nipe, Batabano, and Trinidad, admit only merchantmen.

Though Cuba was discovered by Columbus in 1492, the Spaniards did not attempt to make themselves masters of it till 1511, when Diego de Velázquez came with four ships, and landed on the eastern point.

This district was under the government of a cacique, named Hatuey. He was a native of St. Domingo, or Hispaniola, and had retired hither to avoid the slavery to which his countrymen were condemned. Those who could escape the tyranny of the Castilians had followed him in his retreat, where he formed a little state, and ruled in peace. At a distance he observed the Spanish sails, the approach of which he dreaded. On the first news he received of their arrival he called together the bravest Indians, both of his subjects and allies, to animate them to a defence of their liberty; assuring them, at the same time, that all their efforts would be ineffectual, if they did not first render the god of their enemies propitious to them: "behold him there," said he, pointing to a vessel filled with gold, "behold that mighty divinity, let us invoke his aid!"

This simple and credulous people easily believed that gold, for the sake of which so much blood was shed, was the god of the Spaniards. They danced and sang before the rude and unfashioned ore, and resigned themselves wholly to its protection.

But Hatuey, more enlightened, and more suspicious, than the other caciques, assembled them again. "We must not," said he to them, "expect any happiness so long as the god of the Spaniards remains among us. He is no less our enemy than they. They seek for him in every place; and where they find him, there they establish themselves. Were he hidden in the cavities of the earth, they would discover him. Were we to swallow him, they would plunge their hands into our bowels, and drag him out. There is no place but the bottom of the sea, that can elude their search. When he is no longer among us, doubtless we shall be forgotten by them." As soon as he had done speaking, every man brought out his gold, and threw it into the sea.

Notwithstanding this, the Spaniards advanced. Their

muskets and cannons, those tremendous deities, dispersed with their thunder the savages who endeavoured to resist : but, as Hatuey might reassemble them, he was pursued through the woods, taken, and condemned to be burned. When he was fastened to the stake, and waited only for the kindling of the fire, an inhuman priest advanced to propose the ceremony of baptism, and to speak to him of paradise. " Are there," said the cacique, " any Spaniards in that happy place ? Yes," replied the missionary ; " but there are none but good ones. The best of them," returned Hatuey, " are good for nothing. I will not go to a place where I should be in danger of meeting one of them. Talk no more to me of your religion, but leave me to die."

Thus was the cacique burned, the god of the christians dishonoured, and his cross imbrued with human blood ; but Velasquez found no more enemies to oppose him. No resistance was made, and yet the nation did not long survive the loss of its liberty. In those ferocious times, when to conquer was nothing but to destroy, several inhabitants of Cuba were massacred ; a greater number of them ended their lives in the gold mines, although they were not found abundant enough to be worked for any length of time. At last the small-pox, that poison which hath been transmitted from the Old to the New World, in exchange for a still more fatal poison, completed what had been so much forwarded by the other calamities. The whole island was soon reduced to a desert.

It was indebted for its revival to the pilot Alaminos, who, in 1519, first passed the canal of Bahama, when he was carrying the first intelligence of the success of Cortez to the emperor Charles V. *Importance, government, population, cultures, and other labours, of Cuba.* It was soon understood, that this would be the only convenient road for the ships that should sail from Mexico to Europe, and the Havannah was built to receive them. The utility of this celebrated port was afterwards extended to the vessels dispatched from Porto-Bello and from Carthage. They all put in there, and waited reciprocally for each other, in order to arrive together in the mother country with a greater degree of parade and of se-

curity. The prodigious expences which navigators, laden with the richest treasures of the world, incurred during their stay, occasioned an immense circulation of money in the town, which was itself compelled to send a part of it into the countries, more or less distant, from whence it derived its subsistence. Cuba thus acquired some degree of animation, while the other islands, under the same dominion, still continued in that state of annihilation into which they had been plunged by the conquest. In order to accelerate the slow progress of this settlement, a particular association was formed in 1735. The funds of the new company consisted of one million of piastres, or of 5,400,000 livres [225,000*l.*] They were divided into two thousand shares, one hundred of which belonged to the crown. The privilege of this company was exclusive. They established a factory at Cadix; but Cuba itself was the seat of the monopoly.

The directors, at a distance from the mother country, attended only to the making of their own fortunes; they committed numberless malversations; and the company, whose interests they managed, were so completely ruined in the space of twenty years, that it was no longer possible for them to continue their transactions. The government then authorised a few merchants to carry on this trade, and in 1765, all the Spaniards were freely admitted into a possession which ought never to have been shut against them.

A governor, who bears the title of captain-general, presides at present over the colony. He determines all matters relative to the civil and the military branches; but the finances are under the direction of an intendant. Magistrates, whose judgments may be set aside by the audience of St. Domingo, distribute justice in the eighteen jurisdictions which divide the island.

The bishop's see, and his chapter, are in the town of Cuba. Neither they, nor any other members of the clergy, receive the tithes; they belong, as in the rest of the New World, to the crown; but in this, as well as in other places, without being a resource for the treasury. There are twenty-three convents of men, and three nunneries in the colony, the estates of which are valued, according to the most moderate calculation, at 14,589,590 livres [607,899*l.* 1*l.* 8*d.*] The funds which belong to the order of St.

Jean de Dieu, and which are destined for public use, are not included in this calculation.

Children are either well or ill educated in most of these convents. There is, ever since 1728, an university at the Havannah, which hath a revenue of 37,800 livres [1575l.] and less than two hundred scholars.

Nineteen hospitals are distributed over the island; and there, as in all other parts, people are by no means unanimous with respect to the utility of these establishments, or to the best mode of regulating them. Alas! then, every thing that concerns government is still problematic, and the questions which more particularly affect the happiness of the human species, are, perhaps, those which have been the least satisfactorily solved.

The countries of the globe, which pretend to civilization, are full of indolent men, who choose rather to sue for alms in the streets, than to employ their strength in the manufactures. Our intention is not certainly to harden the hearts of men, but we will pronounce, without hesitation, that these wretches are so many robbers of the real poor; and that whoever grants them any assistance becomes their accomplice. The knowledge of their hypocrisy, of their vices, of their debaucheries, of their nocturnal saturnalia, lessens the commiseration that is due to real indigence. It is certainly a disagreeable task to deprive a citizen of his liberty, which is the only thing he possesses, and to add imprisonment to his misery. And yet the man who prefers the abject state of a beggar, to an asylum where he might earn clothes and subsistence by his labour, is a vicious person who ought to be carried there by force. There are many countries where, from mistaken motives of compassion, the professed beggars are suffered to remain at liberty. The administration of those countries displays, in this instance, more humanity than judgment.

But beside the state of beggary, which is brought on by a spirit of idleness, there must necessarily be poor people without number in every place where there are multitudes of men, who have no protection against misery but in their labour. For all these unfortunate people, a day of sickness is a day of indigence. Every old man is poor. Every man who is disabled either by accident or by natural deformity, old or young, is a poor man. Every labourer,

every soldier, every sailor, who hath either got no employment, or is unable to serve, is a poor man. Poverty begets poverty; were it only from the impossibility that indigent persons should give any kind of education, or furnish any employment to their children. A great conflagration, an inundation, a hail storm, a long and rigorous winter, an epidemical disorder, a famine, a war, great and sudden reductions of rent, bankruptcies, bad, and even sometimes good operations of finance, the invention of a new machine: every cause, in a word, which deprives the citizen of his state, and which suspends, or suddenly diminishes, the daily labours, occasions an incredible number of people to be reduced to poverty in an instant.

And yet, who are these numerous unfortunate people, who are reduced to inevitable poverty without any fault of their own, and perhaps from the injustice of our constitutional laws? They are useful men who have cultivated the lands, cut the stones, constructed our edifices, nourished our children, worked in our mines and in our quarries, defended our country, assisted the efforts of genius, and been serviceable in all the branches of industry.

In order to succour these interesting beings, hospitals have been contrived. But do these establishments answer the end of their institution? Almost in all places they have a number of moral and natural effects, which render the utility of them doubtful in their present state.

Particular and temporary succours, prudently dispensed by government in a season of great popular calamities, would perhaps be better than hospitals which are perpetually maintained. They would prevent beggary, while hospitals encourage it. These asylums for misfortune, are almost all in possession of landed property. This kind of property is liable to too many embarrassments, and to dishonesty in the management of it, and subject to too many vicissitudes in its produce. The directors of it are permanent. Hence their zeal is diminished, and the spirit of fraud and rapine, or at least that of indifference, is substituted to it. These sacred deposits become at last the revenue of those who manage them. The administration of these establishments is almost always a mystery to the government and to the public, while nothing would be more honest and more necessary, than that it should be

exposed to public view : it is also arbitrary, and it ought to be subjected to the most careful and rigorous examination. The depredations that are committed in the palaces of kings, are the subject of much discussion. There at least magnificence, abundance, and the etiquette which composes the false greatness of the throne, are in some sort an apology for this dissipation ; for where there are kings, it is well known there must likewise be abuses. But hospitals are liable to still greater malversations, and yet they are the houses of the poor ! they are the fortunes of the poor ! every thing ought there to present the strictest ideas of economy and order ; every circumstance ought to render these duties sacred. You, who are the directors of these asylums, if you be guilty of negligence, your hearts must be obdurate ! But if you should allow yourselves to commit extortions, by what name can you be called ? You are fit only to be trampled upon in the dust, and to be drenched in blood.

The natural defects of our hospitals are still more deplorable than the moral vices of them. The air is corrupted by a thousand causes, the detail of which would be disgusting to all our senses. We may form a judgment of this from one incontestible experiment. Three thousand men, confined within the limits of one acre, must, by their perspiration alone, form an atmosphere of the height of sixty inches, which becomes contagious if the air be not perpetually renewed. All the people who are habitually employed in the service of the sick are pale, and mostly attacked, even in a state of health, with a peculiar kind of slow fever. How much greater must the same cause operate upon a sick person ? People are discharged from the hospital cured of one disease, and carry away another along with them. Patients are a long time recovering. How many fatal neglects, and unfortunate mistakes, are committed ? The frequency of them stifles remorse.

At the *Hôtel Dieu* of Paris, and at *Bicêtre*, the fifth and the sixth part of the sick perish ; at the hospital of *Lyons*, the eighth and the ninth part.

O thou ! who, descending from the first throne of Europe, hast visited the principal countries of it with the thirst of knowledge, and undoubtedly with the desire of labouring for the good of thine own country ; tell us, how

great was thy horror when thou didst see in one of our hospitals, seven or eight sick persons heaped together in the same bed, all maladies blended together, all the principles and degrees of life and death confounded; one wretch crying out with acute pain, by the side of another who was breathing his last; the dying man lain by the side of the dead one, and all of them reciprocally infecting and cursing each other. Say, why didst thou not represent this picture to the imagination of thy young and compassionate sister, our sovereign? No doubt, she would have been affected with it; her compassion would have been communicated to her husband, and her tears would have interceded for these miserable wretches. How noble a use would this have been making of beauty!

The preservation, therefore, of mankind, the watching over their days, and the removing from them the horrors of misery, is a science so little understood by government, that even the establishments they seem to have made with a view of fulfilling these objects, produce an opposite effect. Astonishing perversion of mind! which ought not to be forgotten by any one of our philosophers, who shall write the immense treatise on the barbarism of civilised nations.

Some men, devoid of feeling, have asserted, that in order to diminish the number, already too great, of idle, negligent, and vicious people, it was necessary that the poor and the sick should not be well treated in the hospitals. And indeed it cannot be denied, but that this barbarous expedient hath been pursued to its utmost extent: nevertheless, what are the effects produced by it? Several men have been destroyed, while no one have been corrected.

Laziness and debauchery may possibly be encouraged in hospitals; but if this defect be inherent in these establishments, it must be borne with. If it can be corrected, we must endeavour to do it. Let hospitals subsist, but let us all exert ourselves by diffusing general competency, in diminishing the multitude of those unfortunate people who are compelled to seek an asylum in them. Let them be employed in charitable houses, in sedentary labours; let laziness be punished there, but let industry be rewarded.

With regard to the sick, let them be taken care of, as men ought to be by men. Their country owes them this

relief from motives of justice or of interest. If they be old, they have served mankind, they have brought other citizens into the world ; if they be young, they may serve mankind again, they may be the source of a new generation. In a word, when they are once admitted into those charitable asylums, let hospitality be exercised in its full extent. Let there be no more mean avarice, no murderous calculations. They ought to find there all the comforts they would find in their own families, if their own families were capable of receiving them.

This plan is not impracticable, it will not even be expensive, when better laws, when a more vigilant, a more enlightened, and especially a more humane, administration, shall preside over these establishments. The experiment hath been just made with success, under our own immediate inspection, by the care of Madame Necker. While this lady's husband is employing himself upon a larger scale, in diminishing the number of unfortunate people, she enters into the details which can alleviate the distresses of those who are already unfortunate. She hath just established in the suburb of St. Germain, an hospital, where sick people, who have each a bed to themselves, and are attended in the same manner as they would be at the house of the most affectionate mother, cost one third less than in any of the hospitals at Paris. Foreigners, who are become members of the nation, by the most meritorious of all naturalizations, by the good you do to it ; generous pair, I venture to name you, although you are still alive, although you are surrounded with the influence of a high post ; and I am not apprehensive of being accused of adulation :—I think I have given sufficient proofs, that I can neither fear nor flatter vice in power, and therefore I have acquired the right of rendering public homage to virtue.

Would to heaven, that the happy experiment we have just mentioned, might bring on a general reformation in all the hospitals founded by the generosity of our ancestors ! Would to heaven, that so fine an establishment might serve as a model for those, which a principle of soft compassion, the desire of expiating the possession of wealth, or a benevolent system of philosophy, may one day excite succeeding generations to found ! This wish of my heart extends to the whole universe ; for my thoughts have no other limits

than those of the world, when they are employed about the happiness of my fellow-creatures. Citizens of the universe, unite yourselves with me ; it is your interest that is in agitation.

What assurances have you, that none of your ancestors have died in an hospital ? What assurances have you that none of your descendants will expire in that retreat provided for misery ? Might not an unexpected misfortune oblige you to take refuge there yourselves ? Let your vows therefore be joined to mine.

Let us now return to our subject. According to accounts taken in 1774, the island of Cuba reckons one hundred and seventy-one thousand six hundred and twenty-eight persons, of whom twenty-eight thousand seven hundred and sixty-six only are slaves. The population must even be rather more considerable, because the well-grounded apprehension of some new tax must have prevented accuracy in the declarations.

Few of the arts, except those of primary necessity, are found in the island. These are in the hands of the mulattoes, or free negroes, and are in a very imperfect state. Joiners work only hath been carried on to a remarkable degree of perfection.

Other mulattoes and blacks are employed in cultivating articles of subsistence. These consist of some fruits of the New World, and some vegetables of the Old ; of maize, and of manioc, the consumption of which hath diminished in proportion as the freedom of trade hath lowered the price of the flour brought from Spain or Mexico, and sometimes also from North America : they consist of tolerable good cacao, but in so small a quantity, that the inhabitants are obliged to draw annually from Caraccas, or from Guayaquil, more than two thousand quintals of it : they consist also of numerous herds of oxen, and especially of hogs, the flesh of which hath been hitherto generally preferred, and will always be so, unless the sheep, which have lately been brought into the island, should make them one day be neglected. All these animals wander about in the pasture grounds, each of which is four, or at least two leagues in extent. Some mules and horses are likewise seen to graze there, which ought to be still more multiplied, be-

cause their present number doth not prevent the inhabitants from purchasing a great quantity from the continent.

The articles destined for exportation employ most of the slaves. From 1748 to 1753, the labour of these unfortunate people did not produce annually, to the mother-country, more than eighteen thousand seven hundred and fifty quintals of tobacco, the value of which in Europe was 1,293,570 livres [53,898*l.* 15*s.*] one hundred and seventy-three thousand eight hundred quintals of sugar, the value of which was 7,994,786 livres [333,116*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.*] fifteen hundred and sixty-nine hides, the value of which was 138,817 livres [5,784*l.* 10*d.*] and 1,064,505 livres [44,354*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.*] in gold and silver. Of this sum, amounting to 10,491,678 livres [437,153*l.* 5*s.*] the tobacco alone was the property of government, all the rest belonged to trade.

Since that period the labours have much increased; they have not, however, been turned towards the culture of indigo and of cotton, although these grow naturally in the island.

The culture of coffee, which hath been lately undertaken, hath not made any considerable progress, nor will it increase. Spain consumes but a small quantity of that production, and the European marts are and will be for a long time overstocked with it. There is more to be expected from the wax.

When Florida was ceded, in 1763, by the court of Madrid to that of London, the five or six hundred miserable people who lived in that island took refuge at Cuba, and carried some bees along with them. These useful insects flew to the forests, fixed themselves in the hollow of old trees, and multiplied with a degree of celerity that seems incredible. The colony, which till then had bought a great deal of wax for their religious solemnities, was soon able to collect a sufficient quantity for this pious use, and for other consumptions. They had some overplus in 1770; and seven years afterwards they exported seven thousand one hundred and fifty quintals and a half of it, for Europe and for America. This production must necessarily increase, under a sky, and on a soil, which are equally favourable to it; in an island where the hives yield four times in every year, and where the swarms succeed each other without interruption.

Tobacco is one of the most important productions of Cuba. Each crop furnishes about fifty-five thousand quintals. Part of this is consumed in the country, or fraudulently carried out of it. The government purchase annually, for their dominions in the Old and in the New World, where they equally monopolize it, forty-six thousand seven hundred and fifty quintals, the price of which varies according to its quality, but which cost, one with another, 48 livres 12 sols [2l. 6d.] the hundred weight. So that the king pours annually into the island 2,272,050 livres [94,668l. 15s.] for this production.

The progress made in the culture of tobacco hath been lately stopped at Cuba. This plant hath even been rooted up in some places where it did not thrive so well. The ministry did not choose that the crops should exceed the demands of the monarchy. They were certainly apprehensive that foreigners, who might have purchased this production in the leaf, would introduce it clandestinely in their provinces, after having manufactured it. It has been thought that the industry of the planters would be more usefully employed in the culture of sugar.

This commodity was little known before the discovery of the New World. It is gradually become the object of an immense commerce. The Spaniards were obliged to purchase it of their neighbours, till at length they thought of planting it at Cuba. The mother-country receives annually from two hundred to two hundred and fifty quintals of it, half of it white, and half raw. It is not as much as its inhabitants can consume; but they will not be obliged to have recourse to foreign markets, when this cultivation shall be as firmly established in the rest of the island, as it already is in the territory of the Havannah.

Before 1765, Cuba did not receive annually more than three or four large ships from Cadiz; and those vessels, which, after having sold their cargoes upon the coasts of the continent, came there in order to take up a lading, which they had not been able to find at Vera Cruz, at Honduras, and at Carthagena. The island was at that time in want of the most necessary things, and the inhabitants were compelled to purchase them of their neighbours, with whom they had formed some smuggling connections. Since the

restraints have been diminished, the number of voyages hath multiplied the productions, which have also reciprocally extended the navigation.

In 1774, one hundred and one vessels arrived from Spain in the colony: these were laden with flour, wines, brandies, and with every thing requisite for a large settlement; and they carried away from thence all the commodities which a better arrangement of things had produced.

The same year Cuba received, upon one hundred and eighteen small vessels, from Louisiana, rice, and the proper wood for their sugar chests; from Mexico, flour, vegetables, Morocco leather, and copper; from the other parts of this large continent, oxen, mules, and cacao; and from Porto Rico two thousand slaves, which had been distributed among these ships.

These vessels of the Old and New World were not allowed to choose the ports where it would have been most convenient for them to put in. They were obliged to land their cargoes at the Havannah, at Port-au-Prince, at Cuba, and at Trinidad, the only places where customs were established. None but fishing smacks and coasting vessels are allowed to frequent all the harbours indiscriminately.

A man, who at this time does honour to Spain, and who would do honour to any country whatever, Mr. Campo Manes, says, that the produce of the customs, which before 1765 had never exceeded 565,963 livres [23,581l. 15s. 10d.], amounts at present to 1,620,000 livres [67,500l.] and that the mother country draws from the colony, in metals, 8,100,000 livres [337,500l.] instead of 1,620,000 livres [67,500l.] which it formerly received. This is an argument in favour of a free trade, of the force of which it were to be wished that mankind could be made sensible.

The taxes levied at Cuba, or those at least which enter the coffers of the state, do not exceed 2,430,000 livres [101,250l.] and government circulates in the island to the amount of 2,272,050 livres [94,668l. 15s. for tobacco; 1,350,000 livres [56,250l.] for the maintenance of the fortifications, 2,160,000 livres [90,000l.] for the usual garrisons, and 3,780,000 livres [157,500l.] for the naval department.

Cedar woods, proper for ship-building, were found all over the colony, though the idea had never occurred of

making any use of them. At length docks were established, in 1724, which have sent out, from that period to the present time, fifty-eight vessels, or frigates. This establishment is kept up, notwithstanding the necessity there is of the importing iron and the ropes used for those vessels, articles which the island doth not furnish; and notwithstanding the custom which hath prevailed since 1750, of bringing from the north of Europe the masts, which were formerly obtained, though of inferior quality, from the gulf of Mexico.

The small fleet destined to clear the coasts of Spain of smugglers or pirates, and which, in the intervals between the cruising seasons used to remain at Vera Cruz, was suppressed in 1748. It was become useless since the government had resolved to maintain constantly at Cuba some maritime forces, more or less considerable. In peace time these vessels carry to the islands of Cumana, and to Louisiana, the funds that are destined for the annual necessities of those several settlements; they prevent smuggling as much as they can; and they cause the name of their master to be respected. In time of war they protect the traders and the territories of their country.

The Havannah, where these ships are constructed, hath just been supplied, by the care of the marquis de la Torre, with some conveniencies and embellishments which had been for a long time desired in vain. This active governor hath given the inhabitants a playhouse, decorated with propriety, two delightful walks, convenient barracks, and five very well contrived bridges. These useful or agreeable establishments have cost the town no more than 482,066 livres [20,086l. 1s. 8d.]

*In what consist
the fortifications
of Cuba.*

GOVERNMENT have allotted, for the fortifications with which the town hath been surrounded, from 1763 to 1777, 22,413,989 livres 18 sols 6 deniers [933,916l. 4s. 11½d.] These works have been constructed by four thousand one hundred and ninety-eight blacks, by fifteen hundred malefactors sent from Spain and Mexico, and by the freemen, who have not disdained this kind of labour.

The harbour of the Havannah is one of the safest in the

universe ; the fleets of the whole world might ride at anchor there together. At the entrance of it there are rocks, against which the vessels that should venture to deviate from the middle of the pass would infallibly be wrecked. It is defended by the Moro and the fort on the point. The former of these fortresses is raised so high above the level of the sea, that even a first rate man of war could not batter it. The other hath not the same advantage ; but it can only be attacked by a very narrow channel, where the warmest assailants could never withstand the numerous and formidable artillery of the Moro.

The Havannah, therefore, can only be attacked on the land side. Fifteen or sixteen thousand men, which are the most that could be employed in this service, would not be sufficient to invest the works, which cover a vast extent. Their efforts must be directed, either to the right or left of the port, against the town, or the Moro. If the latter, they may easily land within a league of the fort, and will come within sight of it, without difficulty, by easy roads, through woods which will cover and secure their march.

The first difficulty will be that of getting water, which, in the neighbourhood of the camp the assailants must choose, is mortal. To obtain such as is drinkable, they must go in boats to the distance of three leagues, and it will be necessary to send a considerable force for this purpose to the only river where it is to be had, or to leave a detachment there in intrenchments ; which being at a distance from the camp, without communication or support, will be in perpetual danger of being cut off.

Previous to the attack of the Moro, the enemy must make themselves masters of the Cavagna, which hath been lately built. It is a crown-work, composed of a bastion, two curtains, and two demi-bastions in front. Its right and left lie upon the bank of the harbour. It hath casemates, reservoirs of water, and powder magazines that are bomb-proof, a good covered way, and a wide ditch cut in the rock. The way which leads to it is composed of stones and pebbles, without any mixture of earth. The Cavagna is placed on an eminence which commands the Moro, but is itself exposed to attacks from a hill which is of an equal height, and not more than three hundred paces distant from it. As it would have been easy for an ene-

my to open their trenches under the cover of this hill, the Spaniards have levelled it, and the Cavagna can now extend its view and its batteries to a great distance. If the garrison should find themselves so pressed, as not to be able to maintain this post, they would blow up the works, which are all undermined, and retreat into the Moro, the communication with which cannot possibly be cut off.

The famous fortress of the Moro had towards the sea, on which side it is impregnable, two bastions; and on the land side two others, with a wide and deep ditch cut out of the rock. Since it was taken, it hath been entirely rebuilt, and its parapets made higher and thicker. A good covered way hath been added, and every thing that was wanting to secure the garrison and the stores. It is not easier to open trenches before this place than the Cavagna. Both of them are built with a soft stone, which will be less dangerous to the defenders than the common sort of free-stone.

Independent of these advantages, the two fortresses have in their favour a climate extremely hazardous to besiegers, and an easy communication with the town for receiving all sorts of provisions, without a possibility of being intercepted. Thus circumstanced, these two places may be considered as impregnable, at least as very difficult to be taken, provided they be properly stocked with provisions, and defended with courage and ability. The preservation of them is of so much greater importance, as their loss would necessarily occasion the surrender of the harbour and town, which are both of them commanded, and may be battered, from these eminences.

After having explained the difficulties of taking the Havannah by attacking the Moro, we must next speak of those which must be encountered on the side of the town.

It is situated near the bottom of the harbour. It was defended, as well towards the harbour as towards the country, by a dry wall, which was good for nothing, and twenty-one bastions, which were not much better. It had a dry ditch, and of little depth. Before this ditch was a kind of covered way, almost in ruins. The place, in this state, could not have resisted a sudden attempt, which, had it been made in the night, and supported by several attacks, true or false, would certainly have carried it. Wide and

deep ditches have been made, and an exceeding good covered way added.

These defences are supported by the fort at the point; which is a square, built of stone, and, though small, is provided with casemates. It hath been rebuilt, having been very much damaged during the siege. There is a good dry ditch round it, digged out of the rock. Independent of its principal destination, which is to co-operate with the Moro in defending the port, and for which it is perfectly well calculated, it hath several batteries which open upon the country, and flank some parts of the town wall.

Its fire crosses that of a fort of four bastions, which hath a ditch, covered way, powder magazine, casemates, and reservoirs of water. This new fortification, which is erected at three quarters of a mile from the place, on an eminence called Arosleguy, will require a siege in form, if the town is to be attacked on that side, particularly as it is so constructed as to have a view of the sea, to command a considerable tract on the land side, and to disturb an enemy exceedingly in getting water, which they must fetch from its neighbourhood.

In skirting the city onward, we come to the fort of Atarès, which has been constructed since the siege. It is of stone, hath four bastions, a covered way, a half moon before the gate, a wide ditch, a good rampart, reservoirs, casemates, and a powder magazine. It is barely three quarters of a league distant from the town, and is situated on the other side of a river and an impracticable morass, which cover it in that direction. The rising ground upon which it is built, is entirely occupied by it, and has been insulated by the digging of a broad ditch, into which the sea hath a passage from the bottom of the harbour. Besides its commanding the communication between the town and the interior part of the island, it defends the circuit of the place by crossing its fires with those of Arosleguy. The Spaniards have constructed a large redoubt in the interval of these two forts, which is an additional protection to the town. The Atarès also crosses its fire with that of the Moro, which is very high, and situated at the extreme point of the fort.

If it were allowable to form an opinion upon a subject, which we do not professionally understand, we might ven-

ture to assert, that those who would undertake the siege of the Havannah, should begin by the Cavagna and the Moro; because these forts, once taken, the town must of course surrender, or be destroyed by the artillery of the Moro. On the contrary, if they should determine for the town side, the besiegers would scarcely find themselves in a better condition, even after they had taken it. Indeed, they would have it in their power to destroy the dock-yards, and the ships that might happen to be in the harbour; but this would produce no permanent advantage. In order to establish themselves, they must still be obliged to take the Cavagna and the Moro, which in all probability they would find impossible, after the loss they must have sustained in the attack of the town and its fortresses.

But whatever plan may be pursued in the siege of this place, the assailants will not only have to combat the numerous garrison inclosed within its works; there will be a corps likewise of twelve thousand four hundred and seventy-two militia, who have been accustomed to manœuvre in a surprising manner, who would take the field, and continually interrupt their operations. These troops, armed, clothed, and accoutred at the expence of the government, and paid in time of war upon the footing of regulars, are trained and commanded by non-commissioned officers sent from Europe, and chosen from the most distinguished regiments. The forming of this militia hath cost an immense sum. The court of Spain is in expectation of future events, to form a judgment of the utility of these expences. But whatever may be the military spirit of these troops, we may pronounce before-hand, that this establishment, in a political view, is inexcusable; and for the following reasons.

The project of making soldiers of all the colonists of Cuba, a most unjust and destructive project to all colonies, has been pursued with uncommon ardour. The violence they have been forced to use with the inhabitants, to make them submit to exercises which they were averse from, has produced no other effects than that of increasing their natural love of repose. They detest those mechanical and forced movements, which, not contributing in any respect to their happiness, appear doubly insupportable; not to mention their seeming frightful or ridiculous to a people, who probably think they have no interest in defending a government by which they are oppressed. The rage of keep-

ing up an army; that madness, which, under pretence of preventing wars, encourages them; which by introducing despotism into governments, paves the way for rebellion among the people; which continually dragging the inhabitant from his dwelling, and the husbandman from his field, extinguishes in them the love of their country, by driving them from their home; which subverts nations, and carries them over land and sea: that mercenary profession of war, so different from the truly military spirit, sooner or later will be the ruin of Europe; but much sooner of the colonies, and perhaps, first of all, of those which belong to Spain.

THE most extensive and most fertile part of the American archipelago is possessed by the Spaniards. These islands, in the hands of an industrious nation, would have proved a source of unbounded wealth. In their present state, they are vast forests, exhibiting only a frightful solitude. Far from contributing to the strength and riches of the kingdom they belong to, they serve only to weaken and to exhaust it by the expences required to maintain them. If Spain had attended properly to the political improvements of other nations, she would have discovered, that several of them owed their influence solely to the advantages they have drawn from islands, in every respect inferior to those which have hitherto only served the ignominious purpose of swelling the list of the numberless and useless possessions of the Spanish crown. She would have learned, that there is no other rational foundation of colonies, especially of those which have no mines, but agriculture.

Hath Spain taken proper measures to render this island useful, and doth she still pursue them?

It is not doing justice to the Spaniards to suppose that they are naturally incapable of labour. If we give the least attention to the excessive fatigues which those of them who are concerned in contraband trade submit to with the utmost patience, we shall find that their toils are infinitely more grievous than any that attend the management of a plantation. If they neglect to enrich themselves by agriculture, it is the fault of their government. Alas! might the disinterested historian, who neither seeks nor desires any thing but the general good of mankind, be permitted to

furnish them with those sentiments and expressions, which the habit of sloth, the rigour of government, and prejudices of every kind, seem to have precluded them from the use of, thus would he in their name address the court of Madrid, and the whole Spanish nation :

“ Reflect on the sacrifices we require from you, and see,
 “ if you will not reap a centuple advantage by the valuable
 “ commodities we shall supply to your now expiring commerce. Your navy, increased by our labours, will form
 “ the only bulwark that can preserve to you those possessions, which are now ready to escape from your hands.
 “ As we become more rich, our consumption will be greater;
 “ and then the country which you inhabit, and which droops
 “ with you, though Nature herself invites it to fertility;
 “ those plains, which present to your eyes only a desert
 “ space, and are a disgrace to your laws and to your manners, will be converted into fields of plenty. Your native
 “ land will flourish by industry and agriculture, which have
 “ now forsaken you. The springs of life and activity, which
 “ ye will have conveyed to us through the channel of the
 “ sea, will flow black, and encompass your dwellings with
 “ rivers of plenty. But if ye prove insensible to our complaints and misfortunes; if ye do not govern us for our
 “ sakes; if we be only the victims of our loyalty; recal to
 “ your minds that ever celebrated era, in which a nation of
 “ unfortunate and discontented subjects shook off the yoke
 “ of your dominion; and by their labours, their success,
 “ and their opulence, justified the revolt in the eyes of the
 “ whole world. They have been free for near two centuries; and shall we still have to lament that we are governed
 “ by you? when Holland broke in pieces the rod of iron,
 “ which crushed her; when she rose from the depth of the
 “ waters to rule over the sea; heaven, without doubt, raised
 “ her up as a monument of freedom, to point out to the
 “ nations of the world the path of happiness, and to intimidate faithless kings who would exclude them from
 “ it.”

It might be suspected that the court of Madrid have discovered that it would be possible to pass this censure upon them. In 1735, their ministry suggested a company for Cuba. Twenty years after, they conceived the idea of a new monopoly for St. Domingo and for Porto-Rico. The society which was to clear these deserts, was est-

blished at Barcelona, with a capital of 1,785,000 livres [74,375*l.*] divided into shares, of the value of a hundred pistols each [83*l.* 15*s.*] This company never paid any interest to its members; they made no dividend; they obtained the important permission of fitting out several vessels for the Honduras. Notwithstanding this, on the 30th of April 1771, their debts, including their capital, amounted to 3,121,692 livres [130,070*l.* 10*s.*] and they had no more than 3,775,540 livres [157,314*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.*] So that in the course of fifteen years, with an exclusive privilege, and with very signal favour, they had gained no more than 653,848 livres [27,243*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] Their affairs have since been in great disorder, and at present they have no degree of activity. They are endeavouring to liquidate their debts, but they cannot dispose of their shares even at fifty per cent. loss.

The ministry had not waited for this reverse of fortune, to judge that they had mistaken the means they had adopted to render these islands flourishing. From 1765, the administrators of that large empire were obliged to acknowledge that their possessions had not acquired the smallest degree of improvement under the yoke of monopoly. They understood that they would never improve under such fatal restraints. This conviction determined them to have recourse to the only principle of prosperity, a free trade: but they had not the courage or the wisdom to remove the obstacles which must necessarily have impeded the happy effects of it.

In the year 1778, these prohibitions, restraints, and impositions, which checked their labours, were partly abolished; but there still remain too many of those oppressive scourges, to give reason to expect much exertion. Were they even totally removed, this would still be only a preliminary step.

All the cultures of the New World require some advances; but considerable capitals are wanted to make that of sugar successful. Excepting at Cuba, there are not perhaps in the other islands five or six inhabitants wealthy enough to cultivate this production. If the Spanish ministry do not bestow liberally their treasures upon these islanders, they will not awake from that long and profound lethargy in which they are plunged. This generosity would be very

practicable in an empire where the public revenue amounts to 140,400,000 livres [5,850,000*l.*] where the expences do not exceed 129,600,000 livres [5,400,000*l.*] and where there remains a balance of 10,800,000 livres [450,000*l.*] which may be laid out in improvements. It is true, that without receiving such powerful assistance from their respective governments, other nations have founded flourishing colonies; but besides that they had not been debased during the course of three centuries, by pride, languor, and poverty, they were also in more favourable and different circumstances.

Happy is the man, who is born after the extinction of this long series of errors which have infected his nation! Happy is the nation, that should rise up in the centre of the most enlightened nations, if it were prudent enough to profit by the faults which they had committed, and to avail itself of the knowledge they had acquired. Such a nation would only have to cast her eyes about her, in order to discern the scattered materials that would constitute her happiness, and to attend to the collecting of them. One of the principal advantages which she would owe, either to the novelty of her origin, or to the tardiness of her labours, or to the long duration of her infant state, would be, that she would be spared the trouble of conquering those rooted prejudices, which were the result of the inexperience of the first legislators, which had been consecrated by time, and which had been maintained against reason and facts; either from pusillanimity, which is apprehensive of any innovation; or from pride, which dreads the being obliged to retract; or from a weak veneration for every thing of ancient date.

Let the court of Madrid hasten to lay open its treasures, and the islands subject to its empire will soon be covered with productions. Their subjects, placed upon an extensive and virgin soil, will not only be dispensed from buying at a high price what serves for their consumption; but, in a little time, they will supplant in all the markets their masters in this career. The most active, the most industrious, and the most enlightened nations, will have laboured for ages in improving their cultures, their mode of managing them and their manufactures, for the advantage merely of a rival, more favoured by nature than themselves. But

it can scarce be expected, that they will submit patiently to such a misfortune.

SINCE the origin of societies, a fatal jealousy prevails among them, which must, it should seem, be perpetual, unless by some inconceivable revolution they should be separated from each other by immense desert intervals. Hitherto they have shewed themselves in the same light as a citizen in our towns, who should be convinced, that the more his fellow-citizens were indigent and weak, the more he would become rich and powerful, and the more he should be able to check their undertakings, to thwart their industry, to limit their cultures, and to confine them to what is absolutely necessary for their subsistence.

Would the nations, that have colonies in America, suffer the Spanish islands to become flourishing?

But it will be urged, that a citizen enjoys his wealth under the protection of the laws. The prosperity of his neighbour may increase without inconvenience to his own, but this is not the case with nations,—and wherefore is it not?—It is because there doth not exist any tribunal before which they can be summoned. But what need have they of such a tribunal?—Because they are unjust and pusillanimous. And what advantage do they derive from their injustice and pusillanimity?—Perpetual wars, and misery which is incessantly renewed. And can it be supposed, that experience will not correct them?—We are perfectly convinced of it. And for what reason?—Because one madman is sufficient to disconcert the wisdom of all other powers, and there will always be more than one at a time upon the several thrones of the universe.

Nevertheless, we hear on every side the nations, and especially those that are commercial, crying out for peace, while they still continue to conduct themselves towards one another, in a manner that excludes them from ever obtaining that blessing. They will all aspire to happiness, and each of them would enjoy it alone. They will all equally hold tyranny in detestation, and they will all exercise it upon their neighbours. They will all consider the idea of universal monarchy as extravagant, and yet they will most of

them act as if they had either attained it, or were threatened with it.

Could I expect any good to result from my discourse, I would address myself to the most turbulent and the most ambitious among the nations, in the following terms.

“ Let us suppose, that you have at length acquired a
 “ sufficient degree of authority among the nations, to reduce
 “ them to that state of degradation and poverty that is suitable to you, what can you expect from this despotism?
 “ For how long a time, and at what price, will you maintain it; and what advantages will accrue to you from it?
 “ —Do you expect that security, with which one is always
 “ sufficiently rich, and without which one is never sufficiently so?—And can you really think yourself not sufficiently
 “ secure? You know, as well as I do, that the times of invasion are past, and it is thus you disguise an inordinate
 “ ambition, under the mask of a ridiculous phantom. You
 “ prefer the vain splendour of this ambition to the enjoyment of real happiness, which you lose in order to deprive
 “ others of it. What right have you to prescribe limits to
 “ their happiness, you who pretend to extend yours beyond
 “ all bounds? You are an unjust people, while you attribute
 “ to yourselves the exclusive right of prosperity. You are a
 “ people erroneous in your calculations, when you hope to
 “ enrich yourselves by reducing others to poverty. You are
 “ still a blind people, if you do not conceive that the power
 “ of a nation which raises itself upon the ruins of all those
 “ that surround it, is a colossus of clay, which astonishes for
 “ a moment, but which crumbles into dust.”

I should afterwards say to the Spanish ministry: “ All
 “ the states of Europe are interested in the prosperity of
 “ your continent in the New World, because the more these
 “ vast states shall be flourishing, the more will their merchandize and their manufactures find advantageous markets;
 “ but this is not the case with the islands. The powers that
 “ have appropriated to themselves the fertility of some of
 “ them, are sufficient to provide for their present wants,
 “ and a new competitor would strongly excite their jealousy.
 “ They would attack this competitor either together or
 “ separately, would not lay aside their arms without having
 “ obliged him to give up the clearing of the lands, perhaps,
 “ even not without having made him experience still greater

“ evils. It is yours to judge, whether these views be false, “ or whether your strength and your courage will allow you “ to bid defiance to such a combination.” The Dutch colonies will never have any thing of this kind to fear.

BEFORE the discovery of the western coast of Africa, of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, and particularly before that of America, the European nations scarcely knew or visited each other, except in making barbarous incursions, the aim of which was plunder, and the consequence destruction. Excepting a small number of tyrants, who, by oppressing the weak, found means to support a luxury dearly purchased, all the inhabitants of the different states were obliged to content themselves with the meagre subsistence furnished them by lands ill cultivated, and a trade which extended only to the frontiers of each province. Those great events towards the end of the fifteenth century, which form one of the most brilliant epochs of the history of the world, did not produce so sudden a change of manners as might naturally be supposed. Some of the Hanse towns and some Italian republics, it is true, ventured as far as Cadiz and Lisbon, which were become great marts, to purchase the rare and valuable productions of the East and West Indies; but the consumption was very small, through the inability of the several nations to pay for them. Most of them were languishing in a state of absolute lethargy; they were totally ignorant of the advantages and resources of the countries that belonged to them.

Political steps taken by the republics of the United provinces at its first rise.

To rouse them from this state of insensibility, there was wanting a people, who, springing from nothing, should inspire every mind with activity and intelligence, and diffuse plenty through every market; that should offer the produce of all countries at a lower price, and exchange the superfluities of every nation for those commodities which they want; that should give a quick circulation to produce, merchandize, and money; and, by facilitating and increasing consumption, should encourage population, agriculture, and every branch of industry. For all these advantages,

Europe is indebted to the Dutch. The blind multitude may be excused in confining themselves to the enjoyment of their prosperity, without knowing the sources of it; but it is incumbent on the philosopher and the politician to transmit to posterity the fame of the benefactors of mankind; and to trace out, if it be possible, the progress of their beneficence.

When the generous inhabitants of the United provinces freed themselves from the dominion of the sea and of tyranny, they perceived that they could not fix the foundation of their liberty on a soil which did not afford even the necessaries of life. They were convinced, that commerce, which to most nations is no more than an accession, a means only of increasing the quantity and value of the produce of their respective countries, was to them the sole basis of their existence. Without territory and without productions, they determined to give a value to those of other nations, satisfied that their own would be the result of the general prosperity. The event justified their policy.

Their first step established, among the nations of Europe, an exchange of the commodities of the north with those of the south. In a short time the sea was covered with the ships of Holland. In her ports were collected all the commercial effects of different countries, and from thence they were dispersed to their respective destinations. Here the value of every thing was regulated, and with a moderation which precluded all competition. The ambition of giving greater stability and extent to her enterprises, excited in the republic a spirit of conquest. Her empire extended itself over a part of the Indian continent, and over all the islands of consequence in the sea that encompass it. By her fortresses, or her fleets, she kept in subjection the coasts of Africa, towards which her ambition, ever directed to useful objects, had turned its attentive and prudent views. Her laws were acknowledged only in those countries of America where cultivation had sowed the seeds of real wealth. The immense chain of her connections embraced the universe, of which, by toil and industry, she became the soul. In a word, she had attained the universal monarchy of commerce.

Such was the state of the United provinces in 1661,

when the Portuguese, recovering themselves from that languor and inaction which the tyranny of Spain had thrown them into, found means to repossess themselves of that part of Brasil which the Dutch had taken from them. From this first stroke, that republic would have lost all footing in the New World, had it not been for a few small islands, particularly that of Curassou, which they had taken in 1634 from the Castilians, who had been in possession of it ever since 1527.

THIS rock, which is not above three leagues off the coast of Venezuela, is about ten leagues long and five broad. It has an excellent harbour, but the entrance is difficult. The basin is extremely large, and convenient in every respect; and it is defended by a fort skillfully constructed, and always kept in good repair.

The French, in 1673, having previously bribed the commandant, landed there to the number of five or six hundred men: but the treason having been discovered, and the traitor punished, they were received by his successor in a very different manner from what they expected, and reembarked with the disgrace of having exposed only their own weakness, and the iniquity of their measures.

Lewis XIV, whose pride was hurt by this imprudent check, sent out d'Estrees five years after with eighteen ships of war, and twelve buccaneering vessels, to wipe off the stain, which in his eyes tarnished the glory of a reign filled with wonders. The admiral was not far from the place of his destination, when by his rashness and obstinacy he ran his ships aground on Davis's island; and, after collecting the shattered remains of his fleet, returned in very bad condition to Brest, without having attempted any thing.

From this period neither Curassou, nor the little islands Aruba and Bonaire, which are dependent on it, have met with any disturbance. No nation has thought of seizing upon a barren spot, where they could find only a few cattle, some manioc, some vegetables proper to feed slaves, and not one article for commerce. St. Eustatia is of still less consequence.

Description of the Dutch island of St. Eustatia. THIS island, which is only five leagues in length and one in breadth, is formed by two mountains, with a narrow vale between them. The eastern mountain bears evident traces of an ancient volcano, and is hollowed almost to the level of the sea. The borders of this gulf, which hath the figure of an inverted cone, are composed of rocks calcined by the fire they must have experienced. However plentiful the rains may be, there is never any collection of water in this crater. It is carried off undoubtedly through the channels of the volcano that still remain open, and may one day, perhaps, contribute to the re-kindling of it, if its focus be not extinguished, or at too great a distance.

Some Frenchmen, who had been driven from St. Christophers, took refuge, in 1629, in this almost uninhabitable place, and abandoned it some time after; perhaps because there was no fresh water, but what they got from rain collected in cisterns. The exact time of their quitting it is not known; but it is certain, that in 1639 the Dutch were in possession of it. They were afterwards driven out by the English, and these by Lewis XIV, who caused his right of conquest to be recognized in the negociation of Breda, and would not listen to the representations of the republic, with which he was then in alliance, and which pressed strongly for the restitution of this island, as having been in possession of it before the war. When the signing of the peace had put an end to these representations, the French monarch, whose pride more readily submitted to the dictates of generosity than of justice, thought it not consistent with his dignity to take advantage of the misfortunes of his friends. He of his own accord restored to the Dutch their island, although he knew that it was a natural fortress, which might be of service in defending that part of St. Christophers which belonged to him.

These republicans, before their disaster, cultivated only tobacco upon this territory. Since their re-establishment, they have planted in the places that were susceptible of this kind of culture, a few sugar-canes, from which they have only received annually eight or nine hundred thousand weight of raw sugar.

Book XII. IN THE EAST AND WEST INDIES.

SOON after this, the colony sent some of its inhabitants to a neighbouring island, known by the name of Saba. This is a steep rock, on the summit of which is a little ground, very proper for gardening. Frequent rains which do not lie any time on the soil, give growth to plants of an exquisite flavour, and cabbages of an extraordinary size. Fifty European families, with about one hundred and fifty slaves, here raise cotton, spin it, make stockings of it, and sell them to other colonies for as much as ten crowns [1l. 5s.] a-pair. Throughout America there is no blood so pure as that of Saba; the women there preserve a freshness of complexion, which is not to be found in any other of the Caribbee islands. Happy colony! elevated on the top of a rock, between the sky and sea, it enjoys the benefit of both elements without dreading their storms; it breathes a pure air, lives upon vegetables, cultivates a simple commodity, from which it derives ease, without the temptation of riches; is employed in labours less troublesome than useful, and possesses in peace all the blessings of moderation, health, beauty, and liberty. This is the temple of peace from whence the philosopher may contemplate at leisure the errors and passions of men, who come, like the waves of the sea, to strike and dash themselves on the rich coasts of America, the spoils and possession of which they are perpetually contending for, and wresting from each other; hence may he view at a distance the nations of Europe bearing thunder in the midst of the ocean, and burning with the flames of ambition and avarice under the heats of the tropics; devouring gold without ever being satisfied; wading through seas of blood to amass those metals, those pearls, those diamonds, which are used to adorn the oppressors of mankind; loading innumerable ships with those precious casks, which furnish luxury with purple, and from which flow pleasures, effeminacy, cruelty, and debauchery. The tranquil inhabitant of Saba views this mass of follies, and spins his cotton in peace.

Description of the Dutch island of Saba.

UNDER the same climate lies the island of St. Martin, which hath seventeen or eighteen leagues in circumference, but less territory than might be expected

Description of the island of St. Martin, part of which belongs to

the Dutch, and from such dimensions, because its bays are
part to the deep and numerous. The ocean hath
French. formed, by pushing the sands from one
 cape to another, several lakes, more or
 less extensive, and most of them abounding in fish. The in-
 land part of the country is filled with high mountains, which
 extend almost everywhere as far as the sea. They were
 covered with valuable trees, before they were stripped of
 that ornament, to make room for cultures, which they
 were found to be better adapted to than the plains and the
 valleys. The soil is generally light, stony, too much ex-
 posed to frequent droughts, and not very fertile; but the
 sky is pure, and the climate remarkably healthy. The na-
 vigation is safe and easy in these latitudes; and the multi-
 plicity and excellence of the anchoring places that are
 found there, occasions the want of harbours to be less sen-
 sibly felt.

The Dutch and French landed, in 1638, in this desert
 island, the first to the south, and the latter towards the
 north. They lived there in peace, but separate from each
 other, when the Spaniards, who were at open war with
 both nations, attacked them, beat them, made them pri-
 soners, and took possession of the place themselves: but
 the conquerors soon grew weary of an establishment, the
 preservation of which was very expensive, and from which
 they did not derive the least advantage. They therefore
 quitted it in 1648, after having destroyed every thing they
 could not carry with them.

These devastations did not hinder the former possessors
 from sending some vagabonds to the island, as soon as they
 knew that it was evacuated. These colonists swore a mu-
 tual faith to each other; and their descendants have been
 faithful to this engagement, notwithstanding the animosi-
 ties that have so often disunited the two mother-countries.
 But the division of the territory, originally too unequal,
 hath been more equitably adjusted. Of ten thousand one
 hundred and eighty squares of ground, comprehending
 each two thousand five hundred square toises, which the
 island contains, the French possess no more than five thou-
 sand nine hundred and four; and the Dutch have succeed-
 ed in appropriating to themselves four thousand one hun-
 dred and seventy-six.

The culture of tobacco was the first which the subjects of the court of Versailles undertook at St. Martin: They abandoned it for indigo, which was succeeded by cotton, to which sugar hath been added, since foreigners have been permitted, from the year 1769, to settle in this island. It reckons at present nineteen plantations, which yield annually one million weight of raw sugar, of a beautiful white colour, but of little consistence; and a still greater number of dwellings, which produce two hundred thousand weight of cotton. These labours are managed by four-score families, thirty-two of which are French, and the rest English, and which form together a population of three hundred and fifty-one white persons, of every age and sex. They have but twelve thousand slaves. This is too little for the extent of the cultures: but the colonists of the Dutch part, who were proprietors of the best lands in the French part, have adopted the custom of sending their negroes to the north, when the labours on the south are at an end. Before 1763, there had not been any regular system of authority in this feeble and miserable settlement. At this period a governor was given to it, who hath not yet attracted any trade from any other country. The French always go in quest of what they want to their neighbour, and always deliver to him their productions.

The Dutch colony is inhabited by six hundred and thirty-nine white men, and three thousand five hundred and eighteen blacks, employed in the cultivation of thirty-two sugar plantations, which commonly produce sixteen hundred thousand weight of sugar; and in the growth of one hundred and thirty thousand cotton trees. This revenue, which is too insufficient, is increased by the produce of a salt marsh, in the seasons which are not excessively rainy. At the morning dawn, some soldiers embark upon flat-bottomed boats; they collect, during the course of the day, the salt which floats upon the surface of the water; and at night they return to shore, in order to begin again the next day this operation, which can only be continued during the months of June, July, and August. The neighbouring islands purchase a small quantity of this production, the total value of which may amount to one hundred thousand crowns [12,500*l*.] but it is principally sent to the provinces of North America, who carry off likewise the rum

and the sugar of the colony, while the cotton is delivered to the traders of Great Britain. Nothing, or scarce any thing, is left for the active merchants of the republic, and for the following reasons.

The settlement of St. Martin, although it belong to the Dutch, is not inhabited by Dutchman. There are scarce five or six families of that nation to be found there, and those are even almost ashamed of their origin. All the rest is English, the people, the language, and the manners. Prejudice hath been carried so far, as to induce the women often to go and lay-in at Anguilla, a British island, which is only two leagues distant, in order that their children may not be deprived of an origin, which is considered in the country as the only one that is illustrious.

*Advantages
which the trade
of Holland ac-
quires from her
islands.*

THE domain of the United provinces, in the great archipelago of America, doth not offer any thing either curious or interesting, at the first aspect. Possessions, which scarce furnish a cargo for six or seven small vessels, do not appear worthy of any attention. Accordingly, they would be buried in total oblivion, if some of these islands, which are nothing as places for cultivation, were not very considerable as commercial islands. We mean those of St. Eustatia and of Curassou.

The desire of forming contraband connections with the Spanish provinces of the New World, decided the conquest of Curassou. A great number of Dutch vessels soon arrived there. They were strong, well armed, and their crews consisted of choice men, whose bravery was supported by powerful motives of interest. Each of them had a share, more or less considerable, in the cargo, which he was determined to defend with his life against the attacks of the guarda costas.

The Spaniards did not always wait for the smugglers. They often resorted of themselves to a staple, which was constantly well supplied, in order to barter their gold, their silver, their bark, their cacao, their tobacco, their hides, and their cattle, for negroes, linens, silks, Indian stuffs, spices, quicksilver, and iron or steel manufactures. This was a reciprocal connection of wants and of assistance, of

labours and of expeditions, between two nations, greedy of riches, and rivals of each other.

The settlement of the company of Caraccas, and the substitution of the register ships to the galleons, hath much diminished this communication: but the connections which have been formed with the south part of the French colony of St. Domingo, have made up in some measure for this deficiency. Every thing is revived, when the two crowns are plunged into the horrors of war, either by their own ambition, or by the ambition of their rivals. Even in time of peace, the republic receives annually from Curassou, twelve vessels laden with sugar, coffee, cotton, indigo, tobacco, and hides, which have been cultivated in a foreign soil.

Every commodity, without exception, that is landed at Curassou, pays one per cent. port-duty. Dutch goods are never taxed higher; but those that are shipped from other European ports pay nine per cent. more. Foreign coffee is subject to the same tax, in order to promote the sale of that of Surinam. Every other production of America is subject only to a payment of three per cent. but with an express stipulation, that they are to be conveyed directly to some port of the republic.

St. Eustatia was formerly subject to the same impositions as Curassou; and yet it carried on most of the trade of Guadaloupe and of Martinico, during the time that these French settlements remained under the odious yoke of monopoly. This business diminished in proportion as the proprietors of those islands adopted sound principles of commerce, and extended their navigation. The free port of St. Thomas was even carrying off from the Dutch the small share of trade they had still retained, when in 1756 it was resolved to abolish most of the established taxes. Since this necessary alteration, St. Eustatia, during the divisions between the ministers of London and Versailles, is become the staple of almost all the merchandize of the French colonies in the Leeward islands, and the general magazine of supply for them. But this great operation was not conducted singly by the Dutch; both English and French united in the harbour of this island, to form, under shelter of its neutrality, commercial engagements. A Dutch passport, which cost less than 300 livres [12l. 10s.] concealed

these connections, and was granted, without inquiring of what nation the person was who applied for it. This great liberty gave rise to numberless transactions and to singular combinations. Thus it is that commerce found the art of pacifying or eluding the vigilance of discord.

The end of hostilities doth not render St. Eustatia of less importance. It still sends annually to the United provinces, twenty-five or thirty vessels, laden with the productions of the Spanish and Danish, and especially of the French, islands, which it pays for with the merchandize of the two hemispheres, or with bills of exchange upon Europe.

All these transactions have brought together, at St. Eustatia, six thousand white people, of various nations, five hundred negroes or mulattoes, and eight thousand slaves. A governor, assisted by a council, without which nothing material can be decided, directs, under the authority of the West-India company, this singular settlement, as well as those of Saba and St. Martin. He resides near a very dangerous anchorage, which, however, is the only one of the island where the vessels can land and take in their cargoes. This bad harbour is protected by a small fort, and by a garrison of fifty men. If it were defended with vigour and skill, the most daring enemy would, in all probability, fail in attempting a descent, which, if even effected, the besieger would still find an almost insurmountable difficulty to conquer, in ascending from the lower town, where the magazines are kept, to the upper town, where all the inhabitants are assembled in the night time.

The Dutch, however, equally ingenious in finding out the means of turning to their own advantage both the prosperity and the misfortunes of others, are not entirely confined, in the New World, to the fluctuating profits of a precarious trade. The republic possesses and cultivates, on the continent, a large territory in the country known by the name of Guyana.

*Philosophical
considerations on
Guyana.*

THIS is a vast country, washed on the east by the sea, on the south by the Amazon, on the north by the Oronooko, and on the west by Rio-Negro, which joins these two rivers, that are the largest in South America.

This singular island presents three remarkable circumstances. The several species of earth are not here disposed, as they are elsewhere, in layers, but casually mixed, and without any order. In the correspondent hills, the salient angles of the one are not answerable to the re-entering angles of the others. The substances, which have been generally taken for flints, are nothing more than pieces of lava, that are beginning to be decomposed.

It follows from these observations, that some revolutions have happened in this part of the globe, and that they have been the work of subterraneous fires, at present extinguished; that the conflagration has been general, because masses are everywhere seen, filled with the scorix of iron; and that calcareous stones, which probably have been all calcined, are not to be found in any part: that the explosion must have been very considerable, and must have levied a great quantity of earth, because volcanoes are only to be found upon the highest mountains, and that the only one on which the crater hath been perceived in these regions, is raised little more than a hundred feet above the level of the sea.

At the period of these great accidents of nature, every thing must have been subverted. The fields must have remained uncovered, alternately exposed to the action of torrents of rain, or to the effects of excessive heat. In this state of revolution, many centuries must have elapsed before the soil can have again become fit to nourish the plants, and after them the trees. We might however be liable to mistake, if we were to compute this change at an excessive distance. The small quantity of vegetating earth found in Guyana, although some be continually formed there by the decomposition of the trees, would furnish an unanswerable argument against the idea of a very remote antiquity.

In the inland parts of the country, the soil is therefore, and will continue for a long time, ungrateful. The upper lands, that is to say, those which are not under water, or marshy, are for the most part nothing more than a confused mixture of clay and chalk, where nothing can grow but manioc, yams, potatoes, and some other plants, which do not turn round on the stem; and even these are too frequently rooted in the season of heavy rains, because the water cannot be drained off. Even in those lands, which

are necessarily looked upon as good, the coffee, the cacao, the cotton plants, and all the useful trees, last but for a very short time, and not sufficiently to reward the labours of the cultivator. Such is, without exception, the interior part of Guyana.

Its shores present another spectacle. The numerous rivers, which from this vast space precipitate themselves in the ocean, deposit incessantly upon their borders, and upon the whole coast, a prodigious quantity of seeds, which germinate in the slime, and produce, in less than ten years, lofty trees, known by the name of mangroves. These large vegetables, attached to their basis by deep roots, occupy all the space where the tide is perceptible. They form vast forests, covered with four or five feet of water during flood, and at the time of ebb, with an equal depth of a soft and inaccessible mud.

This spectacle, which is perhaps not to be equalled in the universe, varies every year upon the coast. In the places where sands are brought and accumulated by the currents, the mangrove perishes with great rapidity, and the forests are carried away by the waves, and disappear. These revolutions are less frequent on the borders of the rivers, where the sands, brought from the mountains during the storms, are conveyed to a distance by the rapidity of the waters.

The revolutions are the same upon the coast of four hundred leagues, which extends from the Amazon to the Orinoco. There is everywhere found, upon the shore, a line of mangroves, alternately destroyed and renewed by the slime and by the sand. Behind this row, at the distance of four or five hundred feet, are found savannahs, deluged by the rain waters, which have no drain; and these savannahs are always extended laterally towards the shore, to a depth more or less considerable, according to the distance or nearness of the mountains.

These immense morasses have never been passed by any thing but reptiles since the creation. The genius of man, prevailing over an ungrateful and rebellious soil, hath altered their primitive destination. It is in the midst of these stagnating, infectious, and muddy, waters, that the spirit of liberty hath formed three useful settlements, the most considerable of which is Surinam.

Six years afterwards, there appeared in this forsaken spot some of those Frenchmen, whom a restless disposition then hurried into all climates, and whom their volatile turn prevented from settling in most of them. They massacred the natives of the country, began to construct a fort, and disappeared.

Settlement formed by the Dutch in Guyana, upon the river Surinam.

Their retreat brought back, in 1650, the nation that had first turned their attention to that so long neglected part of the new hemisphere. The colony had formed forty or fifty sugar plantations, when it was attacked and taken by the Dutch, who were secured in their conquest by the treaty of Breda.

Zealand pretended to have the exclusive right over this useful acquisition, because it had been gained by their troops and their ships. The other provinces, who had shared the expences of the expedition, insisted that it should belong in common to them all. This discussion had for a long time inflamed the minds of the people, when it was resolved in 1682, that Surinam should be given up to the West-India company, but upon condition that they should pay 572,000 livres [23,833l. 6s. 8d.] to the Zealanders; that the trade of the company should be limited to the sale of slaves; and that the country should be open to all the subjects and to all the traders of the republic.

Although the imagination of this great company was filled with remembrance of their former prosperity, they soon comprehended, that the expences required to establish cultures throughout an immense region were above their exhausted strength. The year following they ceded one third of their right to the city of Amsterdam, and one third to a rich citizen, whose name was Van Aarsen, at a price proportioned to what they themselves paid for it. This extraordinary arrangement lasted till 1772, at which period the descendants of Van Aarsen sold their property for 1,540,000 livres [64,166l. 13s. 4d.] to the two other members of the association.

The company found Surinam plunged into those disorders which are the necessary consequence of a long state of anarchy. Their representatives wanted to establish some kind of police, some kind of justice. He was accused of

tyranny to the states-general, and massacred in 1688 by the troops.

The colony was attacked the year following by the French, under the command of Ducasse. The skill of this chief, and the efforts of the brave adventurers who attended him, were not powerful enough against a settlement, where the civil and military troubles had caused a fermentation in the minds of men, who had just been reconciled by a prospect of imminent danger. Cassard, a native of St. Malo, was more fortunate in 1712. He laid Surinam under contributions, and carried off to the amount of 1,370,160 livres [57,290l.] in sugar, or in bills of exchange. This disaster, so much more unexpected as it happened at a time when the arms of the republic were triumphant everywhere else, distressed the planters, who were obliged to give a tenth of their capitals.

The society were accused of having neglected the fortifications, and of having employed, to defend them, only a few troops, and those ill-disciplined. These complaints were soon extended to more serious objects. The reasons, or the pretences for discontent, were multiplied daily. The states-general, wearied with all these contests, charged the stadtholder to put an end to them in whatever manner he might think the most proper. This first magistrate had not yet succeeded in conciliating the minds of the people, when it became necessary to attend to the safety of the colony.

Scarce had the English settled on the banks of the Surinam, before several of their slaves took refuge in the inland countries. The desertion was still more considerable under the Dutch dominion, because they required more constant labours, because the quantity of subsistence was diminished, and more severe punishments were inflicted. These fugitives, in process of time, became numerous enough to form a colony. They used to quit their place of refuge in a body, in order to supply themselves with provisions, arms, and instruments of agriculture; and they brought back with them the negroes who chose to go with them. Some attempts were made to put a stop to these excursions; but they were fruitless, and could not be otherwise. Soldiers grown effeminate, officers without merit and without a sense of honour, had an insurmountable aversion for a war,

where deep morasses and thick forests were to be passed, in order to get within reach of a bold and implacable enemy.

The danger became at last so urgent, that the republic thought proper to send, in 1749, in 1772, and in 1774, some of their best battalions to the assistance of the colony. All that these brave men, arrived from Europe, have been able to accomplish, after various and bloody engagements, has been to procure some kind of tranquillity to the planters, who were before every day in danger of being either ruined or murdered. It hath been necessary successively to acknowledge the independence of several numerous hordes, but which have no communication with each other, and are separated by considerable distances. Annual presents are sent them, and it hath been stipulated that they should enjoy all the advantages of a free trade. These new nations have on their part agreed only to assist their ally, if it be necessary; and to return them every slave who shall take refuge upon their territory. To give a sanction to these several treaties, the plenipotentiaries of the contracting parties have caused an incision to be made in their arms. The blood was received in vases filled with water and earth. This disgusting mixture hath been drunk on both sides, in token of fidelity. If they had refused to submit to this extreme humiliating step, these oppressive masters would never have obtained a peace from their former slaves.

AFTER so many fatal events, the colony is still become more flourishing than *Causes of the prosperity of the colony of Surinam.* could have been expected. The causes of this surprising prosperity cannot but be curious and interesting.

The first Europeans who settled in those barbarous regions, established their cultures at first upon heights, which were commonly barren. It was soon suspected that their saline particles had been detached by the torrents; and that it was from these successive layers of an excellent slime, that the lower grounds had been formed. Some fortunate experiments confirmed this judicious conjecture; and it was determined to take advantage of so great a discovery. This was not an easy undertaking, but the desire of success surmounted all obstacles.

These vast plains are overflowed by the rivers with which

they are watered, but not during the whole year. Even in the season of the overflowings, the waters are diffused a little before and a little after the times of high water. During the ebb, the rivers retire gradually, and at low water are sometimes several feet below the soil, which they covered six hours before.

The drying up of these grounds must be begun when the rains are not abundant, and when the rivers are low. This season begins in August, and ends in the month of December. During this period, the space which is to be secured from inundations is surrounded with a dike, sufficient to resist the waters. It is seldom necessary to raise it above three feet high, because it is not usual to choose a territory that is more than two feet under water, to settle a plantation upon.

At one of the corners of the dike, which is made of the earth of the ditch digged for that purpose, is an hydraulic machine, entirely open on one side, cut on the other in the shape of a beak, and furnished with a flood-gate, which is opened by the impulse of the waters from below upwards, and which shuts again by its own weight. When the agitation of the sea swells the waves, the rivers press upon this flood-gate, and close it so effectually, that the waters on the outside cannot get into it. When, on the contrary, the rivers are low, the internal and rain waters, if there be any, raise the gate up, and the waters run off very easily.

In the inner part of the dike, at different distances from each other, a few slight trenches are made. They all terminate in a ditch, which surrounds the plantation. This precaution contributes to raise the soil, and to carry off any superfluous moisture that might remain.

The labours of one year are sufficient to surround the territory which is intended to be inclosed. It is ploughed the second year, and might be cultivated at the beginning of the third, if it were not absolutely necessary to leave it for a sufficient length of time exposed to the influence of the fresh water, in order to counteract the action of the marine salts. This circumstance necessarily retards the crops more than could be wished; but the abundance of them compensates for the delay.

The coffee-tree, which is generally planted in other co-

lonies upon the sloping grounds, leaves sooner or later a void, which cannot be filled up, either by another coffee-tree, or by any other plant, because the storms have successively deprived this soil of every thing that rendered it fertile. This is not the case at Surinam. This valuable tree doth not, indeed, preserve its vigour more than about twenty years; but the young plants, put between the old ones, and intended to succeed them, prevent the planter from being sensible of this premature decay. This is the reason that the crops are never interrupted. They are even more plentiful than in the other settlements.

The disposition of the sugar plantations, in those singular marshes, have this peculiarity attending them, that the territory is intersected by several small canals, destined for the conveyance of the sugar canes.

They all terminate in the great canal, which receives the waters when they rise, by one of its outlets; and by the other works a mill, when they descend. The first production in these plantations is very indifferent; but it acquires, in process of time, the proper degree of perfection. This may be waited for with less impatience in a region where the canes, at their fifth or sixth crop, yield as much sugar as is obtained elsewhere from the new planted canes. One of the principles of this fertility must be, the facility with which the planters can surround their habitations with water during the dry season. The habitual moisture which this method keeps up in the grounds, appears preferable to the watering of them, which is practised in other parts at a considerable expence, and which cannot even be always done everywhere.

Since the Dutch have succeeded in subduing the ocean in the New World as well as in the Old, their cultures have prospered. They have carried them on twenty leagues beyond the sea, and given to their plantations an agreeable aspect and convenience, which are not to be perceived in the most flourishing possessions of the English or French. Spacious and well-contrived buildings, terraces perfectly straight, kitchen gardens exquisitely neat, delightful orchards, and walks planted with symmetry, strike the eye on all sides. So many wonders, accomplished in less than a century, in sloughs that were originally disgusting and unwholesome, cannot be viewed without emotion. But the

severe eye of reason puts a restraint on the transports excited by this enchanting scene. The capitals employed in these superfluities would be more wisely laid out in the multiplication of vendible productions.

One of the means by which labour, and that kind of luxury that hath been introduced, have been chiefly encouraged, has been the extreme facility which the colonists have found in getting a capital. They have obtained all the money they could make use of, at the rate of five or six per cent. but with the express condition, that their plantations should remain mortgaged to their creditor; and that till the sum was entirely paid off, they should be obliged to give up to him all their productions at the current price in the colony.

Present state of the colony of Surinam, and extent of its debts. WITH the assistance of these loans, four hundred and thirty plantations have been formed on the banks of the Surinam, of the Commewine, of the rivers of Cottica and of Perica. In 1775, they yielded twenty-four millions one hundred and twenty thousand weight of rough sugar, which was sold in Holland for 8,333,400 livres [347,225l.] fifteen millions three hundred and eighty-seven pounds weight of coffee, which were sold for 8,580,934 livres [357,538l. 18s. 4d.] nine hundred and seventy thousand pounds weight of cotton, which were sold for 2,372,255 livres [98,843l. 19s. 2d.] seven hundred and ninety thousand eight hundred and fifty-four pounds weight of cacao, which were sold for 616,370 livres [25,682l. 1s. 8d.] one hundred and fifty-two thousand eight hundred and forty-four pounds weight of wood for dying, which were sold for 14,788 livres [616l. 13s. 4d.] The sum total of these productions amounted to 49,917,747 livres [822,905l. 19s. 2d.] and was brought into the harbours of the republic upon seventy vessels. The number of these vessels would have increased, if the five hundred and sixty thousand gallons of molasses, and the hundred and sixty-six gallons of rum, sent to North America, had been conveyed to Europe; and they will still increase, if the tobacco which hath just begun to be planted, should thrive as well as is expected.

The united labours of these settlements, employed in

1775, sixty thousand slaves of every age and sex. They belonged to two thousand eight hundred and twenty-four masters, exclusive of the women and children. The white people were of several countries and of different religions.

Such is the influence of the spirit of trade, that it forces all national and religious prejudices to submit to that general interest, which should be the bond of union among mankind. What are those idle nominal distinctions of Jews or christians, French or Dutch? Miserable inhabitants of a spot, which ye cultivate with so much toil and sorrow, are ye not all brethren? Why then do ye drive each other from a world, where ye live but for an instant? And what a life too is it, that ye have the folly and cruelty to dispute with each other the enjoyment of? Is it not sufficient, that the elements, the heavens, and even the earth, combat against you, but ye must add to those scourges, with which nature hath surrounded you, the abuse of that little strength she has left you to resist them?

Paramabiro, the principal place of the colony of Surinam, is a small town pleasantly situated. The houses are pretty and convenient; though they are only built of wood upon a foundation of European bricks. Its port, which is five leagues distant from the sea, has every requisite that can be desired. It is the rendezvous of all the ships dispatched from the mother-country to receive the produce of this colony. The company to which this large settlement belongs, is obliged to defray the public expences. The sovereign hath enabled them to fulfil this obligation, by permitting them to levy some taxes, which cannot be increased without the consent of the state and of the inhabitants. A poll-tax of one hundred sols [4s. 2d.] upon every free adult or slave, and of sixty sols [2s. 6d.] for every child, was formerly the highest of these contributions. In 1776, it hath been changed for another less degrading, of six per cent. upon the productions of the country, upon the profits of trade, and upon the wages of the several occupations. Nevertheless, the payment of two and a half per cent. for the commodities which were exported from the colony, and of one and a half per cent. for those which were imported, hath not been discontinued. These taxes united, are scarce sufficient for the great object for which they are designed, and there is seldom any thing remaining for the benefit of the company.

Beside the taxes levied for the company, there is one which is rather considerable, upon the productions of the colony, which the citizens have agreed to establish themselves for their respective wants, and especially for the pay of three hundred free negroes, who are employed in protecting the cultures from the incursions of the fugitive negroes.

Notwithstanding all these imposts, and notwithstanding the obligation of paying the interest of 77,000,000 livres [3,208,333l. 6s. 8d.] the colony was in a flourishing state, while its productions had a certain and advantageous mart. But since coffee hath lost in trade one half of its former price, every thing is fallen into extreme confusion; the debtor is become insolvent, hath been driven from his plantation. Even the most mercile's creditor hath not been able to recover his capital, and they have both been ruined. Men have become still more exasperated against each other, their minds have been depressed, and it is difficult to foresee at what period concord and industry will revive. Let us examine what hath been the fate of Berbice, during this fatal crisis.

Foundation of the colony of Berbice. Its past misfortunes and its present misery.

THIS settlement, bounded on the east by the river Corentin, and on the west by the territory of Demerary, extends no more than ten leagues along the coast. In the inland part of the country it might reach as far as that part of the Cordeliers, known by the name of the Blue mountains. The great river from which it hath derived its name, being choked up at its mouth by a bank of mud and sand, hath at first no more than fourteen or fifteen feet in depth, but it soon acquires forty; and its navigation is easy as far as thirty-six leagues from the sea, which is the utmost extent of the most distant plantations.

The foundations of this colony were laid in 1626. As it was formed in a district included in the grant given to the West-India company, that body, which was at that time powerful and strongly protected, reserved to themselves some privileges, and more especially the exclusive sale of slaves. The culture of sugar and arnotto, which were the only articles attended to, had not made any considerable

progress, when, in 1689, some French adventurers ravaged the country, and did not leave it till they had extorted the promise of 44,000 livres [1,833l. 6s. 8d.] which were never paid. Some Frenchmen invaded the colonies again in 1712. In order to escape pillage, and to get rid of these foreigners, the inhabitants engaged to give them 660,000 livres [27,500l.] The negroes, the sugar, and the provisions which were delivered, amounted to 28,654 livres 4 sols [1,193l. 18s. 6d.] the remainder was to be paid in Europe by the proprietors of the habitations, who all belonged to the province of Zealand. Whether from inability, or through design, they refused to ratify an engagement entered into without their consent. Three rich individuals of Amsterdam fulfilled the obligation, and became sole proprietors of Berbice.

They conducted themselves with prudence and moderation. They restored the ancient plantations, they introduced a better method among those who cultivated them; they added the culture of cacao to those which were already known: but their capital was not sufficient to raise the colony to that degree of prosperity of which it appeared to be susceptible; 7,040,000 livres [293,333l. 6s. 8d.] were thought necessary for this great object, and sixteen shares, each of 4,400 livres [183l. 6s. 8d.] were created. They were not able to dispose of more than nine hundred and forty-one, upon which even the purchasers did not furnish more than 42 per cent. Thus the new capital was reduced to 1,573,352 livres [65,556l. 6s. 8d.] out of which 1,320,000 livres [55,000l.] belonged to the former company for the cession of all their property; so that the remainder of the money amounted to no more than 273,352 livres [11,389l. 13s. 4d.]

This was a very small sum to answer the intended purpose. The proprietors were themselves so well convinced of it, that in 1730 they required that every subject of the state should be allowed to trade to Berbice and to settle there, upon condition of paying in America six livres [5s.] poll-tax for every white man, and for every negro they should place upon their habitation 55 livres [2l. 5s. 10d.] per plantation, towards the ecclesiastical contribution; two and a half per cent. for all the merchandize which should enter the colony, or for the provisions which should be

carried out of it; and in Europe 3 livres [2s. 6d.] per ton, for every thing they should receive from the ports of the republic, and 3 livres [2s. 6d.] per ton for every article they should send there. With these assistances, the company engaged to defray all the expences that should be wanted for government, for defence, for the police, and for the legislation of that settlement. The states-general approved of this plan, and gave it the sanction of their laws, by a decree of the 6th December 1732.

A tolerable degree of activity was the fortunate result of these new arrangements. Every thing was in a prosperous state, when, in 1756, the white people, and they alone, were attacked with an epidemical disorder, which lasted seven years, and destroyed the greatest number of them. The state of weakness to which Berbice was reduced by this calamity, encouraged the slaves to rebel in 1763. Upon the first intimation of this insurrection, twenty soldiers, and a few colonists who had escaped the contagion, took refuge upon four vessels that were in the river, and soon after secured themselves in a redoubt built near the ocean. They were at length enabled, by the assistance sent from all quarters to them, to return to their plantations, and even to subdue the negroes; but their authority was established only upon ruins and upon dead bodies.

The company being ruined, as well as the inhabitants, were obliged to call upon the holders of shares for a contribution of eight per cent. which made up the sum of 330,000 livres [13,750l.] and to borrow 1,100,000 livres [45,833l. 6s. 8d.] of the province of Holland, at the interest of two and a half per cent. These sums not being yet sufficient to fulfil their obligations, they obtained of the republic in 1774, that the taxes levied till this period should for the future be doubled. The new taxes threw the planters, already too much discouraged by the total loss of their cacao trees, and by the enormous reduction of the price of their coffee, into despair. Accordingly this settlement, upon which so great hopes had been founded, is continually decreasing.

There are but one hundred and four plantations in the colony, most of which are inconsiderable, scattered at great distances upon the banks of the river Berbice, or upon that of Canje, which empties itself in the first, at three leagues

distance from the sea. Their population consists of seven thousand slaves of every age and sex, and of two hundred and fifty white men, exclusive of the soldiers, who ought to amount to the same number. The coffee, the sugar, and cotton, they produce annually, is conveyed to the mother-country upon four or five ships, and is not sold for more than one million, or twelve hundred thousand livres [from 41,666l. 13s. 4d. to 50,000l.] From this sum an interest of six per cent. ought to be deducted, which the colonists have engaged to pay for about 1,760,000 livres [73,333l. 6s. 8d.] which they have borrowed; but this is an obligation which it is not in their power to fulfil. The lenders are obliged to be satisfied with four, three, or two, per cent. Several of them even do not receive any thing.

Although, according to the calculations delivered in 1772 to the states-general, the annual expences of sovereignty do not exceed in Europe and in America 190,564 livres [7,940l. 3s. 4d.] the company are nevertheless in a desperate situation. From 1720 to 1763, the united dividends have not amounted to more than 61 per cent. which makes, one year with another, no more than $1\frac{1}{4}\%$. After this period there hath been no more dividend. Accordingly, the shares, which have cost 2,200 livres [91l. 13s. 4d.] are no longer marketable; they would not sell for 110 livres [4l. 11s. 8d.] A very different idea must be formed of the colony of Essequibo.

THIS river, twelve leagues distant from that of Berbice, first attracted the attention of the Dutch, who, as well as the other Europeans, infested Guyana with their plunders towards the end of the sixteenth century, in hopes of finding gold there. It is unknown at what precise period they settled at Essequibo; but it is certain that they were driven from it by the Spaniards in 1595.

Antiquity of the colony of Essequibo. Cause of its prosperity, after having remained for a long time in a languid state.

It is evident that these republicans returned to their post, since they were again expelled from it in 1666 by the English, and even they could not maintain themselves there for one whole year. This settlement, which had always been inconsiderable, was reduced to nothing when the Dutch

retook possession of it. In 1740 its productions did not form more than the cargo of one single vessel.

Two or three years after, some of the colonists of Esse-
quibo turned their attention towards the neighbouring
river of Demerary. Its borders were found very fertile,
and this discovery was attended with fortunate circum-
stances.

For some time past the clearing of the lands had been
suspended at Surinam, by the bloody and ruinous war
which the colonists sustained against the negroes assembled
in the woods. Berbice was likewise disturbed by the revolt
of its slaves. The West-India company seized this favour-
able opportunity of inviting enterprising men of all nations,
to share in the grant that had been made to them. Those
who arrived there with a small share of property, received
gratuitously a certain extent of territory, with some other
encouragements. They were even assured, that after their
first labours, they should obtain a loan of the value of three
fifths of the settlements they should have formed upon mo-
derate terms. This arrangement became a fruitful source
of industry, of activity, and of economy. In 1769, there
were already established upon the banks of the Demerary,
one hundred and thirty habitations, in which sugar, coffee,
and cotton, were cultivated with success. The number of
plantations hath much increased since that period, and it
will still increase a great deal more.

*Confusion that
prevails in the
Dutch colonies.*

SUCH is the state of the three colonies
which the Dutch have successively formed
in Guyana. It is deplorable, and will
remain so for a long while, perhaps for
ever, unless government in their wisdom, in their generosity,
and in their courage, can suggest some expedient to relieve
the planters from the oppressive burden of the debts which
they have contracted.

In modern times, the governments themselves have set
the example of loans. The facility of obtaining them at an
interest more or less burthenfome, hath engaged or support-
ed almost all of them, in wars, incompatible with their na-
tural resources. This folly hath infected the cities, the
provinces, and the several associations of men. The large
trading companies have also greatly extended this custom ;

and it hath afterwards become familiar to bold men, urged by their disposition to extraordinary enterprises.

The Dutch, who, in proportion to their territory and to their population, had accumulated a greater quantity of metals than any other people, and who did not find a use for them in their own transactions, extensive even as they were, have endeavoured to place them to advantage in the public funds of all nations, and even in the speculative undertakings of individuals. Their money hath served particularly to cultivate some foreign colonies in America, and principally their own. But the precaution they had taken of having the plantations of their debtors mortgaged to them, hath not produced the effect which they expected from it. They have never been reimbursed their capital, and have even never received the interest of their money, since the provisions of those settlements have been reduced in their price. The contracts made with the planters, who are reduced to a state of indigence, have fallen fifty, sixty, eighty, per cent. below their original value.

This is a matter totally ruinous. It would be in vain to examine, whether it must be attributed to the avidity of the merchants settled at Amsterdam, or to the inactivity and idle expences of the colonists removed beyond the seas. These discussions would not diminish the evil. We will leave such idle questions to be discussed by idle men, let them write and dispute; if no good should result from this, there is not much harm in it. But it is exertion, and not discourse, that is required in a conflagration. While time would be lost in examining what hath been the cause of the fire, what ravages it hath made, and what its progress hath been, the building would be reduced to ashes. A matter of a very urgent nature should engage the attention of the states-general. Let them relieve that vast extent of country subject to Holland, from the river Poumaron to that of Marony, from the anxiety it labours under, and from the misery with which it is oppressed, and let them afterwards remove the other obstacles which so obstinately impede its advancement.

That difficulty which arises from the climate, appears the most unsurmountable. In this region, the year is divided between continual rains and excessive heats. Disgusting reptiles are incessantly attacking the crops purchased by

the most assiduous labours. The colonists run the risk of perishing, either by dropfies, or by fevers of all kind. Authority is unavailing against these scourges of nature. The only remedy, if there can be one, must be the work of time, of population, and of the clearing of the lands.

What the laws can, and what they ought to do, would be to unite to the body of the republic, possessions which are in a manner casually abandoned to private associations, who do not attend sufficiently, or in a proper manner, to the several parts of administration in the countries subject to their monopoly. States have been all convinced, sooner or later, of the inconvenience of leaving the provinces they have invaded in the other hemisphere to chartered companies, whose interests seldom coincided with those of the public. They have at length understood, that the distance did not alter the nature of the express or tacit covenant made between administration and the subjects; and that when the subjects have said, we will obey, we will serve, we will contribute to the formation and to the maintenance of the public strength, and that the ministry have answered, we will protect you within by our police and by our laws, and without by negotiations and by arms, these conditions ought equally to be fulfilled on both sides, from one bank of a river to the opposite side, from one shore of the sea to that which is opposed to it: they have understood, that the stipulated protection being withdrawn, the obedience and the promised succours were of course suspended; that if the assistances should be required, when the protection had ceased, administration would degenerate into a tyrannical system of plunder; and that the people were released from the oath of fidelity towards them; that they were intitled to free themselves from a bad master, and at liberty to choose another; that they returned to a state of absolute freedom, and recovered the prerogative of instituting any form of government that might be thought most suitable to them. From these circumstances, states have concluded, that their subjects of the New World had as much right as those of the Old, to depend upon government only; and that their colonies would be in a more flourishing condition under the immediate protection of the state, than under that of any intervening power. The success hath generally demonstrated the solidity of these views. None but the

United provinces have adhered to the original plan. This infatuation cannot last ; whenever it shall be dissipated, the revolution will be effected without commotion, because none of the associations which must be abolished have any interest in opposing it : it will even be accomplished without embarrassment, because none of those associations have one single vessel, or carry on the least trade. The Dutch possessions in Guyana will then form one entire state, capable of making some resistance. ☉

In the present state of things, Berbice and Essequibo are scarce able to repulse an enterprising pirate, and would be obliged to capitulate at the appearance of the smallest squadron. The eastern part, which by its wealth is exposed to greater danger, is better defended. The entrance of the Surinam river is not very practicable, on account of its sand-banks. Ships, however, that do not draw more than twenty feet water, can come in at flood. At two leagues from its outlet, the Commewine joins the Surinam. This point of union the Dutch have principally fortified. They have erected a battery on the Surinam, another on the right bank of the Commewine, and on the left bank a citadel called Amsterdam. These works form a triangle ; and their fires, which cross each other, are contrived to have the double effect of preventing ships from proceeding further up one river, and from entering into the other. The fortress is situated in the middle of a small morass, and is inaccessible, except by a narrow causeway entirely commanded by the artillery. It requires no more than eight or nine hundred men to garrison it completely. It is flanked with four bastions, and surrounded with a mud rampart, a wide ditch full of water, and a good covered-way : for the rest, it is unprovided with powder magazines, hath no vaults, nor any kind of casement. Three leagues higher up on the Surinam, is a masked battery, intended to cover the harbour and town of Paramaribo. It is called Fort Zeeland. A battery of the same kind, which they call Sommeswelt fort, covers the Commewine at nearly the same distance. The forces of the colony consist of its militia, and twelve hundred regulars, and of two companies of artillery.

If this settlement were united to the two others, and if all these divided territories were joined, they would mutually assist each other. The republic itself, accustomed to

cast a watchful eye upon a domain become more particularly its own property, would protect it with all its power. The sea and land forces would be employed to shelter it from the dangers with which it might be threatened on the side of Europe, and to relieve it from the state of anxiety with which it is continually agitated even on the continent.

The Dutch exercised against the negroes in Guyana, cruelties unknown in the islands. The facility of desertion in an immense territory, hath probably occasioned this excess of barbarity. A slave is put to death by his master upon the slightest suspicions, in presence of all the other slaves, but with the precaution of keeping the white men out of sight, because they alone might give their testimony in a court of justice against this usurpation of public authority.

These cruelties have successively driven to the forests a considerable multitude of these deplorable victims of an infamous avarice. A sharp and bloody war hath been carried on against them without a possibility of destroying them. Their independence hath at length been necessarily acknowledged, and since these remarkable treaties they have formed several hamlets, where they cultivate in peace, upon the back settlements of the colony, the provisions they are absolutely in want of for their subsistence.

Other negroes have forsaken their manufactures. These fugitives fall unexpectedly, sometimes upon one side of the colony, sometimes upon another, in order to carry off supplies for their own subsistence, and to lay waste the wealth of their former tyrants. It is in vain that the troops are kept continually upon the watch, to check or to surprize so dangerous an enemy. By means of private information, they contrive to escape every snare, and direct their incursions towards those parts which happen to be left defenceless.

Methinks I see those people who were slaves in Egypt, and who, taking refuge in the deserts of Arabia, wandered for the space of forty years, attempted to make incursions upon all the neighbouring people, harassed them, penetrated alternately among some of them, and by slight and frequent inroads paved the way for the invasion of Palestine. If nature should chance to add a great soul, and a powerful un-

derstanding, to the outward form of a negro; if some European should aspire to the glory of being the avenger of nations that have been oppressed during two centuries; if even a missionary should know how to avail himself properly of the continual and progressive ascendant of opinion over the variable and transient empire of strength,—but alas! must the cruelty of our European policy inspire sanguinary ideas, and suggest plans of destruction to an equitable and humane man, whose thoughts are engaged in securing the peace and happiness of all mankind?

The republic will prevent the subversion of their settlements, by laying a salutary restraint on the caprices and extravagances of their subjects. They will also take effectual measures to bring into their own ports the fruits of their labours, which hitherto have been too often thrown into another channel.

The principal proprietors of Dutch Guyana reside in Europe. There are scarcely to be found in the colony any inhabitants, but the factors of these wealthy men, and such proprietors, whose fortunes are too moderate to admit of their intrusting the care of their plantations to other hands. The consumption of such inhabitants must be extremely confined. Accordingly, the vessels which are sent from the mother-country to bring home their produce, carry out nothing but absolute necessities; very seldom any articles of luxury, and but few of them. Even this scanty supply the Dutch traders are forced to share with the English of North America.

Those foreigners were at first admitted only because the colony was under a necessity of purchasing horses of them. The difficulty of breeding, and perhaps other causes, have established this permission. The bringing of horses is so indispensable a passport for the men, that a ship which does not carry a number proportionate to its size is not admitted into their harbours. But if the horses happen to die in their passage, it is sufficient that their heads are produced, to intitle the owners to expose to sale all kinds of provisions. There is a law forbidding payments to be made otherwise than by barter of molasses and rum; but this law is little attended to. The English, newly arrived, who have usurped the right of importing thither whatever they choose, take care to export the most valuable commodities of the

colony, and even exact payments in money or bills of exchange on Europe. Such is the law of force, which republics apply, not only to other nations, but to each other. The English treat the Dutch nearly in the same manner as the Athenians did the people of Melos. "It has ever been the case," said they to the inhabitants of that island, "that the weakest should submit to the strongest: this law is not of our making; it is as old as the world, and will subsist as long as the world endures." This argument, which is so well calculated to suit the purposes of injustice, brought Athens in its turn under the dominion of Sparta, and at length destroyed it by the hands of the Romans.

The losses of the Dutch must render them careful of their American possessions.

THE United provinces have not given to their American settlements that attention they deserved, although they have met with strokes so severe, and so closely following upon each other, as ought to have opened their eyes. If they had not been blinded by the rapidity of their success, they would have discovered the beginning of their ruin in the loss of Brazil. Deprived of that vast acquisition, which in their hands might have become the first colony of the universe, and might have compensated the weakness or insufficiency of their territory in Europe, they saw themselves reduced to the condition they were in before they had made this conquest, of being factors for other nations; and thus was created, in their mass of real wealth, a void which hath never since been filled up.

The consequences of the act of navigation, passed in England, were not less fatal to the Dutch. From this time that island, ceasing to be a tributary to the trade of the republic, became her rival, and in a short time acquired a decisive superiority over her in Africa, Asia, and America.

Had other nations adopted the policy of Britain, Holland must have sunk under the stroke. Happily for her, their kings knew not, or cared not for the prosperity of their people. Every government, however, in proportion as it has become more enlightened, has assumed to itself its own branches of commerce. Every step that has been taken for this purpose, hath been an additional check upon the Dutch; and we may presume, from the present state

of things, that sooner or later every people will establish a navigation for themselves, suited to the nature of their country, and to the extent of their abilities. To this period the course of events in all nations seems to tend; and whenever it shall arrive, the Dutch, who are indebted for their success, as much to the indolence and ignorance of their neighbours, as to their own economy and experience, will find themselves reduced to their original state of poverty.

It is not certainly in the power of human prudence to prevent this revolution; but there was no necessity to anticipate it, as the republic has done, by choosing to interfere as a principal in the troubles which so frequently have agitated Europe. The interested policy of our times would have afforded a sufficient excuse for the wars she hath commenced or sustained for the sake of her trade. But upon what principle can she justify those in which her exorbitant ambition, or ill-founded apprehensions, have engaged her? She has been obliged to support herself by immense loans; if we sum up together all the debts separately contracted by the generalities, the provinces, and the towns, which are all equally public debts, we shall find they amount to two thousand millions of livres [83,333,333l. 6s. 8d.]; the interest of which, though reduced to two and a half per cent. hath amazingly increased the load of taxes.

Others will perhaps examine, whether these taxes have been laid on with judgment, and collected with due economy. It is sufficient here to remark, that they have had the effect of increasing so considerably the price of necessaries, and consequently that of labour, that the industrious part of the nation have suffered severely from them. The manufactures of wool, silk, gold, silver, and a variety of others, have sunk, after having struggled for a long time under the growing weight of taxes and scarcity. When the spring equinox brings on at the same time high tides and the melting of the snow, a country is laid under water by the overflowing of the rivers. No sooner does the increase of taxes raise the price of provisions, than the workman, who pays more for his daily consumption, without receiving any addition to his wages, forsakes the manufacture and workshop. Holland hath not preserved any of its internal resources of trade, but such as were not exposed to any foreign competition.

The husbandry of the republic, if we may be allowed to call it by that name, that is to say, the herring fishery, hath scarce suffered less. This fishery, which for a long time was intitled the gold mine of the state, on account of the number of persons who derived their subsistence, and even grew rich from it, is not only reduced to one half, but the profits of it, as well as those of the whale fishery, are dwindled by degrees to nothing. Nor is it by advances of specie, that those who support these two fisheries embark in the undertaking. The partnerships consist of merchants, who furnish the bottoms, the rigging, the utensils, and the stores. Their profit consists almost entirely in the vent of these several merchandizes: they are paid for them out of the produce of the fishery, which seldom yields more than is sufficient to defray its expences. The impossibility there is in Holland of employing their numerous capitals to better advantage, has been the only cause of preserving the remains of this ancient source of the public prosperity.

The excessive taxes, which have ruined the manufactures of the republic, and reduced the profits of their fisheries so low, have greatly confined their navigation. The Dutch have the materials for building at the first hand. They seldom cross the sea without a cargo. They live with the strictest sobriety. The lightness of their ships in working is a great saving in the numbers of their crews; and these crews are easily formed, and always kept in the greatest perfection, and at a small expence, from the multitude of sailors swarming in a country which consists of nothing else but sea and shore. Notwithstanding all these advantages, which are further increased by the low rate of money, they have been forced to share the freight-trade of Europe with Sweden, Denmark, and especially the Hamburgers, with whom the necessary requisites for navigation are not encumbered with the same impositions.

With the freights have diminished the commissions which used to be sent to the United provinces. When Holland was become a great staple, merchandize was sent thither from all parts, as to the market where the sale of it was most ready, sure, and advantageous. Foreign merchants were the more ready oftentimes to send them thither, as they obtained, at an easy rate, credit to the amount of two thirds, or even three fourths, of the value of their goods.

This management insured to the Dutch the double advantage of employing their capitals without risk, and obtaining a commission besides. The profits of commerce were at that time so considerable, that they could easily bear these charges; they are now so greatly lessened, since experience has multiplied the number of adventurers, that the seller is obliged to convey his commodity himself to the consumer, without the intervention of any agent. But if upon certain occasions an agent must be employed, they will prefer, *ceteris paribus*, those ports where commodities pay no duty of import or export.

The republic hath likewise lost the trade of insurance, which she had in a manner monopolized formerly. It was in her ports that all the nations of Europe used to insure their freights, to the great profit of the insurers, who, by dividing and multiplying their risks, seldom failed of enriching themselves. In proportion as the spirit of inquiry introduced itself into all our ideas, whether of philosophy or economy, the utility of these speculations became universally known. The practice became familiar and general; and what other nations have gained by it, was of course lost to Holland.

From these observations it is evident, that all the branches of commerce the republic was in possession of, have been very greatly diminished. Perhaps the greater part of them would have been annihilated, if the quantity of her specie, and her extraordinary economy, had not enabled her to be satisfied with a profit of three per cent. which we look upon to be the value of the product upon all her trade. This great deficiency has been made up to them by vesting their money in the English, French, Austrian, Saxon, Danish, and even Russian, funds, the amount of which, upon the whole, is about sixteen hundred millions of livres [66.666,666l. 13s. 4d.]

Formerly the state made this branch of commerce unlawful, which is now become the most considerable of any. Had this law been observed, the sums they have lent to foreigners would have lain unemployed at home; their capitals for the use of trade being already so large, that the least addition to them, so far from giving an advantage, would become detrimental, by making the amount too great for use. The superfluity of money would immediately

have brought the United provinces to that period, in which excess of wealth begets poverty. Millions of opulent persons, in the midst of their treasures, would not have had a sufficiency to support themselves.

The contrary practice hath been the principal resource of the republic. The money she has lent to neighbouring nations, has procured her an annual balance in her favour, by the revenue accruing from it. The credit is always the same, and produces always the same interest.

We shall not presume to determine how long the Dutch will continue to enjoy so comfortable a situation. Experience authorizes us only to declare, that all governments which have, unfortunately for the people, adopted the detestable system of borrowing, will sooner or later be forced to give it up; and the abuse they have made of it will most probably oblige them to defraud their creditors. Whenever the republic shall be reduced to this state, her great resource will be in agriculture.

This, though it be capable of improvement in the county of Breda, Bois-le-Duc, Zutphen, and Guelders, can never become very considerable. The territory belonging to the United provinces is so small, that it will almost justify the opinion of a sultan, who seeing with what obstinacy the Dutch and Spaniards disputed with each other the possession of it, declared, if it belonged to him, he would order his pioneers to throw it into the sea. The soil is good for nothing but fish, which, before the Dutch, were the only inhabitants of it. It has been said with as much truth as energy, that the four elements were but in embryo there.

The existence of the republic in Europe is precarious, from their position in the middle of a capricious and boisterous element which surrounds them, which perpetually threatens them, and against which they are obliged to maintain means of defence as expensive as a numerous army; from formidable neighbours, some on the seas, and others on the continent; from the barrenness of the soil, which produces nothing of what is absolutely required for daily subsistence. Without any wealth of their own, their magazines, which are at present filled with foreign merchandize, may be to-morrow either empty or overstocked, whenever the nations shall either choose to cease the furnishing of them with any, or shall no longer require any from them.

Exposed to every kind of want, their inhabitants will be forced to leave their country, or to die with hunger upon their treasures, if they cannot be relieved, or if succours be refused to them. If it should happen that the nations should become enlightened with respect to their interests, and should resolve to carry their productions themselves to the different regions of the earth, and to bring back upon their own ships those which they shall receive from thence in exchange, what will become of these useless carriers? Deprived of original materials, the possessors of which are at liberty to prohibit the exportation of, or to fix them at, an exorbitant price, what will become of their manufactures? Whether the destiny of any power should depend upon the wisdom or upon the folly of others, that power is almost equally an object of compassion. Without the discovery of the New World, Holland would be nothing, England would be inconsiderable, Spain and Portugal would be powerful, and France would be what she is, and what she will ever remain, under whatever master, and under whatever form of government, she may be placed. A long series of calamities may plunge her into misfortunes, but those misfortunes will be only temporary, since nature is perpetually employed in repairing her disasters. And this is the enormous difference there is between the condition of an indigent people and that of a people rich in their territory. The latter can exist without all other nations, while these can scarce exist without them. Their population must be incessantly increasing, if a bad administration do not retard the progress of it. Several successive years of general dearth will only bring on a transient inconvenience, if the wisdom of the sovereign should provide against it. They scarce stand in need of any allies. If the combined policy of all the powers should concur in refusing to purchase their commodities, they would still experience nothing more than the inconvenience of superfluity, and the diminution of their luxury; an effect which would turn to the advantage of their strength, which is enervated, and of their manners, which are corrupted. True riches they are in possession of, and have no need to go in search of them at a distance: so that the superabundance or scarcity of the metal which represents their felicity, can be of no avail either for or against it.

Deprived of these advantages in Europe,* the republic must seek them in America. Her colonies, though very inferior to the settlements formed there by most of the other nations, would furnish productions, the whole profits and property of which will centre in her. By her territorial acquisitions she will be enabled in every market to rival those nations, whose commodities she formerly served only to convey. Holland, raised to the dignity of a state, will cease to be a warehouse. She will find in another hemisphere that confidence which Europe hath denied her. It remains to see, if Denmark can have the same wants and the same resources.

Revolutions which have changed the state of Denmark. DENMARK and Norway, which are at present united under the same government, formed, in the eighth century, two different states. While the former signalized itself by the conquest of England, and other bold enterprises, the latter peopled the Orcades, Fero, and Iceland. Urged by that restless spirit, which had always actuated their ancestors the Scandinavians, this active nation, so early as the ninth century, formed an establishment in Greenland, which country, there is good reason to suppose, is attached to the American continent. It is even thought, notwithstanding the darkness which prevails over all the historical records of the north, that there are sufficient traces to induce a belief, that their navigators in the eleventh century were hardy enough to penetrate as far as the coasts of Labrador and Newfoundland, and that they left some small colonies on them. Hence it is probable, that the Norwegians have a right to dispute with Columbus the glory of having discovered the New World; at least, if those may be said to have made the discovery, who were there without knowing it.

The wars which Norway had to sustain, till the time it became united to Denmark; the difficulties which the government opposed to its navigation; the state of oblivion and inaction into which this enterprising nation fell; not only lost it its colonies in Greenland, but also whatever settlements or connections it might have had on the coasts of America.

It was not till more than a century after the Genoese navigator had begun the conquest of that part of the world under the Spanish banner, that the Danes and Norwegians, who were then become one nation, cast their eyes upon that hemisphere, which was nearer to them than to any of those nations who had already possessed themselves of different parts of it. They chose, however, to make their way into it by the shortest course, and therefore, in 1619, they sent Captain Monk to find out a passage by the northwest into the Pacific ocean. His expedition was attended with as little success as those of many other navigators, both before and after him.

It may be presumed, that a disappointment in their first attempt would not entirely have disgusted the Danes; and that they would have continued their American expeditions till they had succeeded in forming some settlements, that might have rewarded them for their trouble. If they lost sight of those distant regions, it was because they were forced to it by an unfortunately obstinate war, which humbled and tormented them, and lasted till the year 1660.

The government seized the first moment of tranquillity to examine the condition of the state. Like all other Gothic governments, it was divided between an elective chief, the nobility or senate, and the commons. The king enjoyed no other pre-eminence than that of presiding in the senate, and commanding the army. In the intervals between the diets the government was in the hands of the senate: but all great affairs were referred to the diets themselves, which were composed of the clergy, nobility, and commonalty.

Though this constitution be formed upon the model of liberty, no country was less free than that of Denmark. The clergy had forfeited their influence from the time of the Reformation. The citizens had not yet acquired wealth sufficient to make them considerable. These two orders were overwhelmed by that of the nobility, which was still influenced by the spirit of the original feudal system, that reduces every thing to force. The critical situation of the affairs of Denmark did not inspire this body of men with that justice or moderation, which the circumstances of the time required. They refused to contribute their proportion to the public expences; and by this refusal exasperated

the members of the diet. But, instead of exterminating this proud race, which was desirous of enjoying the advantages of society, without partaking the burden of it, they resolved to submit to unlimited servitude, and voluntarily put on chains themselves, which the nobles would never have ventured to impose upon them by force, or with which they would perhaps have in vain attempted to load them.

At this strange and humiliating spectacle, is there any one who will not ask, what is man? What is that original and deep sense of dignity which he is supposed to possess? Is he born for independence or for slavery? What is that senseless herd of men which we call a nation? And when, on reviewing the globe, the same phenomenon, and the same meanness, are displayed in a greater or less degree from one pole to the other, is it possible that pity should not be extinguished, and that in the contempt which succeeds to it we should not be tempted to exclaim: base and stupid people, since the continuity of oppression doth not restore to you any energy; since you confine yourselves to unavailing groans, when you might make your oppressors tremble; since there are millions of you, and that yet you suffer yourselves to be led at pleasure by a few infants, armed with despicable weapons, continue still to obey. Go on without troubling us with your complaints; and learn at least how to be unhappy, if you know not how to be free.

The Danes had no sooner submitted to one single chief, than they fell into a kind of lethargic state. To those great convulsions, which are occasioned by the clashing of important rights, succeeded the delusive tranquillity of servitude. A nation, which had filled the scene for several ages, appeared no more on the theatre of the world. In 1671, it just recovered so far from the trance, into which the accession of despotism had thrown it, as to look abroad, and take possession of a little American island, known by the name of St. Thomas.

The Danes form settlements in the islands of St. Thomas,

THIS island, the farthest of the Caribbees towards the west, was totally uninhabited, when the Danes undertook to form a settlement upon it. They were

at first opposed by the English, under *St. John*, and pretence that some emigrants of that *Santa Cruz* nation had formerly begun to clear it.

The British ministry stopped the progress of this interference; and the colony were left to form plantations of sugar, such as a sandy soil, of no greater extent than five leagues in length, and two and a half in breadth, would admit of. These improvements, which were at that time very rare in the American archipelago, were brought on by particular causes.

The elector of Brandenburg had formed, in 1681, a company for the western part of Africa. The object of this association was to purchase slaves; but they were to be sold again; and that could be done in no other place than in the New World. It was proposed to the court of Versailles to receive them in their possessions, or to cede *Santa Cruz*. These two proposals being equally rejected, Frederic William turned his views towards *St. Thomas*. Denmark consented in 1685, that the subjects of this enterprising prince should establish a factory in the island, and that they should carry on a free trade there, upon condition of paying the taxes established, and of agreeing to give an annual stipend.

They were then in hopes of furnishing the Spanish colonies, which were dissatisfied with England and Holland, with the negroes which those provinces were continually in want of. The treaty not having taken place, and the vexations being incessantly multiplied, even at *St. Thomas*, the transactions of the inhabitants of Brandenburg were always more or less unfortunate. Their contract, however, which had been only made at first for thirty years, was renewed. Some few of them still belonged to it, even in 1731; but without any shares or any charter.

Nevertheless, it was neither to the productions, nor to the undertakings of the inhabitants, of Brandenburg, that the island of *St. Thomas* was indebted for its importance.

The sea has hollowed out from its coast an excellent harbour, in which fifty ships may ride with security. This advantage attracted both the English and French buccaneers, who were desirous of exempting their booty from the duties they were subject to pay in the settlements belonging to their own nations. Whenever they had taken their

prizes in the lower latitudes, from which they could not make the Windward islands, they put into that of St. Thomas to dispose of them. It was also the asylum of all merchant-ships which frequented it as a neutral port in time of war. It was the mart, where the neighbouring colonies bartered their respective commodities which they could not do elsewhere with so much ease and safety. It was the port from which were continually dispatched vessels richly laden to carry on a clandestine trade with the Spanish coasts; in return for which, they brought back considerable quantities of metal and merchandize of great value. In a word, St. Thomas was a market of very great consequence.

Denmark, however, reaped no advantage from this rapid circulation. The persons who enriched themselves were foreigners, who carried their wealth to other situations. The mother country had no other communication with its colony than by a single ship, sent out annually to Africa to purchase slaves, which being sold in America, the ship returned home laden with the productions of that country. In 1719 their traffic increased by the clearing of the island of St. John, which is adjacent to St. Thomas, but not half so large. These slender beginnings would have required the addition of Crab island, or Bourriquen, where it had been attempted to form a settlement two years before.

This island, which is from eight to ten leagues in circumference, has a considerable number of hills: but they are neither barren, steep, nor very high. The soil of the plains and valleys, which run between them, seems to be very fruitful; and is watered by a number of springs, the water of which is said to be excellent. Nature, at the same time that she has denied it a harbour, has made it amends by a multitude of the finest bays that can be conceived. At every step some remains of plantations, rows of orange and lemon trees, are still found; which make it evident, that the Spaniards of Porto-Rico, who are not further distant than five or six leagues, had formerly settled there.

The English, observing that so promising an island was without inhabitants, began to raise some plantations there towards the end of the last century; but they had not time to reap the fruit of their labour. They were surprised by

the Spaniards, who murdered all the men, and carried off the women and children to Porto-Rico. This accident did not deter the Danes from making some attempts to settle there in 1717. But the subjects of Great Britain, reclaiming their ancient rights, sent thither some adventurers, who were at first plundered, and soon after driven off, by the Spaniards. The jealousy of these American tyrants extends even to the prohibiting of fishing-boats to approach any shore where they have a right of possession, though they do not exercise it. Too idle to prosecute cultivation, too suspicious to admit industrious neighbours, they condemn the Crab island to eternal solitude; they will neither inhabit it themselves, nor suffer any other nation to inhabit it. Such an exertion of exclusive sovereignty has obliged Denmark to give up this island for that of Santa Cruz.

Santa Cruz had a better title to become an object of national ambition. It is eighteen leagues in length, and from three to four in breadth. In 1643 it was inhabited by Dutch and English. Their rivalry in trade soon made them enemies to each other. In 1646, after an obstinate and bloody engagement, the Dutch were beat, and obliged to quit a spot from which they had formed great expectations. The conquerors were employed in securing the consequences of their victory, when, in 1650, they were attacked and driven out in their turn by twelve hundred Spaniards, who arrived there in five ships. The triumph of these lasted but a few months. The remains of that numerous body, which were left for the defence of the island, surrendered without resistance to a hundred and sixty French, who had embarked in 1651, from St. Christophers, to make themselves masters of the island.

These new inhabitants lost no time in making themselves acquainted with a country so much disputed. On a soil, in other respects excellent, they found only one river of a moderate size, which, gliding gently almost on a level with the sea through a flat country, furnished only a brackish water. Two or three springs, which they found in the innermost parts of the island, made but feeble amends for this defect. The wells were for the most part dry. The construction of reservoirs required time. Nor was the climate more inviting to the new inhabitants. The island

being flat, and covered with old trees, scarce afforded an opportunity for the winds to carry off the poisonous vapours, with which its morasses clogged the atmosphere. There was but one remedy for this inconvenience; which was to burn the woods. The French set fire to them without delay; and, getting on-board their ships, became spectators from the sea, for several months, of the conflagration they had raised in the island. As soon as the flames were extinguished, they went on-shore again.

They found the soil fertile beyond belief. Tobacco, cotton, amotto, indigo, and sugar, flourished equally in it. So rapid was the progress of this colony, that, in eleven years from its commencement, there were upon it eight hundred and twenty-two white persons, with a proportionable number of slaves. It was rapidly advancing to prosperity, when such obstacles were thrown in the way of its activity as made it decline again. This decay was as sudden as its rise. In 1696 there were no more than one hundred and forty-seven men, with their wives and children, and six hundred and twenty-three blacks remaining; and these were transported from hence to St. Domingo.

Some obscure individuals, some writers unacquainted with the views of government, with their secret negotiations, with the character of their ministers, with the interests of the protectors and the protected, who flatter themselves that they can discern the reason of events, amongst a multitude of important or frivolous causes, which may have equally occasioned them; who do not conceive, that among all these causes, the most natural may possibly be the farthest from the truth; who after having read the news, or journal of the day, with profound attention, decide as peremptorily as if they had been placed all their life-time at the helm of the state, and had assisted at the council of kings; who are never more deceived than in those circumstances, in which they display some share of penetration; writers as absurd in the praise as in the blame which they bestow upon nations, in the favourable or unfavourable opinion they form of ministerial operations: these idle dreamers, in a word, who think they are persons of importance, because their attention is always engaged on matters of consequence, being convinced that courts are always governed in their decisions by the most comprehensive views of profound policy, have supposed, that the

court of Versailles had neglected Santa Cruz, merely because they wished to abandon the small islands, in order to unite all their strength, industry, and population, in the large ones; but this is a mistaken notion: this determination, on the contrary, arose from the farmers of the revenue, who found, that the contraband trade of Santa Cruz with St. Thomas was detrimental to their interests. The spirit of finance hath in all times been injurious to commerce; it hath destroyed the source from whence it sprang. Santa Cruz continued without inhabitants, and without cultivation, till 1733, when it was sold by France to Denmark for 738,000 livres [30,750*l.*] Soon after the Danes built there the fortress of Christianstadt.

Then it was, that this northern power seemed likely to take deep root in America. Unfortunately, she laid her plantations under the yoke of exclusive privileges. Industrious people of all sects, particularly Moravians, strove in vain to overcome this great difficulty. Many attempts were made to reconcile the interests of the colonists and their oppressors, but without success. The two parties kept up a continual struggle of animosity, not of industry. At length the government, with a moderation not to be expected from its constitution, purchased, in 1754, the privileges and effects of the company. The price was fixed at 9,900,000 livres [412,500*l.*] part of which was paid in ready money, and the remainder in bills upon the treasury, bearing interest. From this time the navigation to the islands was opened to all the subjects of the Danish dominions.

On the first January 1773, there was reckoned in St. John sixty-nine plantations, twenty-seven of which were devoted to the culture of sugar, and forty-two to other productions of less importance. There were exactly the same number at St. Thomas, and they had the same destination, but were much more considerable. Of three hundred and forty-five plantations, which were seen at Santa Cruz, one hundred and fifty were covered with sugar-canes. In the two former islands, the plantations acquire what degree of extent it is in the power of the planter to give them, but in the last, every habitation is

limited to three thousand Danish feet in length, and two thousand in breadth.

St. John is inhabited by one hundred and ten white men, and by two thousand three hundred and twenty-four slaves : St. Thomas, by three hundred and thirty-six white men, and by four thousand two hundred and ninety-six slaves : Santa Cruz, by two thousand one hundred and thirty-six white men, and by twenty-two thousand two hundred and forty-four slaves. There are no freed men at St. Johns, and only fifty-two at St. Thomas, and one hundred and fifty-five at Santa Cruz ; and yet the formalities required for granting liberty, are nothing more than a simple enrolment in a court of justice. If so great a facility hath not multiplied these acts of benevolence, it is because they have been forbidden to those who had contracted debts. It hath been apprehended, that the debtors might be tempted to be generous at the expence of their creditors.

This law appears to me a very prudent one ; with some mitigation it might be of service, even in our countries. I should very much approve, that all citizens invested with honourable functions, either at court, in the army, in the church, or in the magistracy, should be suspended whenever they should be legally sued by a creditor, and that they should be unremittingly deprived of their rank whenever they should be declared insolvent by the tribunals. It appears to me that money would then be lent with more confidence, and borrowed with greater circumspection. Another advantage which would accrue from such a regulation, would be, that the subaltern orders of men, who imitate the customs and the prejudices of the higher class of citizens, would soon be apprehensive of incurring the same disgrace ; and that fidelity in engagements would become one of the characteristics of the national manners.

The annual productions of the Danish islands are reduced to a small quantity of coffee, to a great deal of cotton, to seventeen or eighteen millions weight of raw sugar, and to a proportionate quantity of rum. Part of these commodities are delivered to the English, who are proprietors of the best plantations, and in possession of the slave trade. We have before us at present, very authentic accounts, which prove that from 1756 to 1773, that nation hath sold in the Danish settlements in the New World, to the amount:

of 2,307,686 livres 11 sols [96,153*l.* 12*s.* 1½*d.*] and carried off to the value of 3,197,047 livres 5 sols 6 deniers [133,210*l.* 6*s.* 0¼*d.*] North America receives likewise some of these productions in exchange for its cattle, for its wood, and for its flour. The remainder is conveyed to the mother country upon forty ships of one hundred, and from that to four hundred tons burthen. The greatest part is consumed in Denmark, and there is scarcely sold in Germany, or in the Baltic, for more than the value of one million of livres [41,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*]

The lands susceptible of cultivation in the Danish islands are not all tilled, and those which are, might be improved. According to the opinion of the best-informed men, the produce of these possessions might easily be increased by one third, or perhaps by one half.

One great obstacle to this increase of riches, is the extremely narrow circumstances of the colonists. They owe 4,500,000 livres [187,500*l.*] to government, 1,200,000 livres [50,000*l.*] to the trade of the mother country, and 26,630,170 livres [1,109,590*l.* 8*s.* 4*d.*] to the Dutch, who, from the immensity of their capitals, and the impossibility of employing them all themselves, necessarily become the creditors of all nations.

The avidity of the treasury puts fresh restraints upon industry. The provisions and merchandize which are not peculiar to the country, or which have not been brought upon Danish vessels, are obliged to pay four per cent. upon their departure from Europe. The national and foreign commodities equally pay six per cent. on their arrival in the islands; 18 livres [15*s.*] are required for every fresh negro brought in, and a poll-tax of 4 livres 10 sols [3*s.* 9*d.*] Some heavy duties are laid upon stamp paper; an impost of 9 livres [7*s.* 6*d.*] for each thousand foot square of ground, and the tenth of the price of every habitation that is sold. The productions are all subjected to five per cent. duty on their leaving the colonies, and to three per cent. on their arrival in any of the ports of the mother country, exclusive of the duties which are paid for rum when consumed in retail. These tributes collectively bring in to the crown an income of eight or nine hundred thousand livres, [from 33,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* to 37,500*l.*]

It is time that the court of Copenhagen should give up these numerous and oppressive taxes. Well-grounded me-

tives of interest ought certainly to suggest the same kind of conduct to all the powers that have possessions in the New World. But Denmark is more particularly compelled to this act of generosity. The planters are loaded with such enormous debts, that they will never be able to repay the capitals, and cannot even make good the arrears, unless the treasury should entirely drop every kind of claim upon them.

But can such a prudent measure be expected, either in Denmark or elsewhere, as long as the public expences shall exceed the public revenues; as long as the fatal events, which, in the present order, or rather disorder, of things, are perpetually renewed, shall compel administration to double or to treble the burthen of their unfortunate, and already overloaded subjects; as long as the councils of the sovereigns shall act without any certain views, and without any settled plan; as long as ministers shall conduct themselves, as if the empire, or their functions, were to end the next day; as long as the national treasures shall be exhausted by unparalleled depredations, and that its indigence shall only be removed by extravagant speculations, the ruinous consequences of which will not be perceived, or will be neglected, for the trifling advantages of the moment? and to make use of an energetic, but true metaphor, one that is terrifying, but symbolical of what is practised in all countries; as long as the folly, the avarice, the dissipation, the degradation, or the tyranny, of the rulers, shall have rendered the treasury so much exhausted or rapacious, as to induce them to "burn the harvest, in order the more speedily to collect the price of the ashes!"

If the treasury were by chance to become wiser and more generous in Denmark than they have been, or than they are, in any other part of the globe, the islands of St. Thomas, of St. John, and of Santa Cruz, might possibly prosper, and their productions might, in some measure, compensate for the trifling value of those of the mother-country.

*Rapid sketch of
the Danish
power.*

THE provinces which at present constitute the domains of this state in Europe, were formerly independent of each other. Revolutions, most of them of a

singular nature, have united them into one kingdom. In the centre of this heterogeneous composition are some islands, the principal of which is called Zealand. It has an excellent port, though in the eleventh century it was but a little fishing town; it became a place of importance in the thirteenth; in the fifteenth, the capital of the kingdom; and, since the fire in 1728, which consumed sixteen hundred and fifty houses, it is a handsome city. To the south of these islands is that long and narrow peninsula, which the ancients called the Cimbrica Chersonesus. Jutland, Sleswick, and Holstein, the most important and extensive parts of this peninsula, have been successively added to the Danish dominions. They have been more or less flourishing, in proportion as they have felt the effects of the restlessness of the ocean, which sometimes retires from their coasts and sometimes overwhelms them. In these countries, one may see a perpetual struggle between the inhabitants and the sea, an incessant contest, the success of which hath always been equivocal. The inhabitants of such a country will be free from the moment they feel that they are not so. Mariners, islanders, and mountaineers, will not long remain under the yoke of despotism.

Nor is Norway, which constitutes part of the Danish dominions, more adapted to servitude. It is covered with flanes or rocks, and intersected by chains of high and barren mountains. Lapland contains only a few wild people, either settled upon the sea-coasts, for the sake of fishing, or wandering through frightful deserts, and subsisting by the chase, by their furs, and their rein-deer. Iceland is a miserable country, which has been many times overturned by volcanoes and earthquakes, and conceals within its bowels a quantity of combustible matter, which in an instant may reduce it to a heap of ruins. With respect to Greenland, which the common people look upon as an island, and which geographers consider as united towards the west to the American continent; it is a vast and barren country, condemned by nature to be eternally covered with snow. If ever these countries should become populous, they would be independent of each other, and of the king of Denmark, who thinks at present that he rules over their wild inhabitants, because he calls himself their king, while they know nothing of the matter.

The climate of the Danish islands in Europe is not so severe as might be conjectured from the latitude they lie in. If the navigation of the gulfs which surround them be sometimes interrupted, it is not so much by ice formed there, as by what is driven thither by the winds, and by degrees collects into a mass. All the provinces which make part of the German continent, except Jutland, partake of the German temperature. The cold is very moderate even on the coasts of Norway. It rains there often during the winter, and the port of Bergen is scarcely once closed by ice, while those of Amsterdam, Lubec, and Hamburg, are shut up ten times in the course of the year. It is true, that this advantage is dearly purchased by thick and perpetual fogs, which make Denmark a disagreeable and melancholy residence, and its inhabitants gloomy and low-spirited.

The population of this empire is not proportioned to its extent. In the earlier ages it was ruined by continual emigrations. The piratical enterprises which succeeded to these, kept up this state of poverty, and anarchy prevented the government from remedying evils of such magnitude and importance. The double tyranny of the prince over one order of his subjects, who fancy themselves to be free, under the title of nobles, and of the nobility over a people entirely deprived of liberty, extinguishes even the hopes of an increase of population. The bills of mortality of all the states of Denmark, excepting Iceland, taken together, make the deaths in 1771 amount only to 55,125; so that, upon the calculation of thirty-two living to one dead person, the whole number of inhabitants does not amount to more than 1,764,000.

Independent of many other causes, the weight of imposts is a great obstacle to their prosperity. There are fixed taxes payable on land, arbitrary ones collected by way of capitation, and daily ones levied on consumption. This oppression is the more unjust, as the crown possesses a very considerable domain, and hath likewise a certain resource in the straits of the Sound. Six thousand nine hundred and thirty ships, which, if we may judge from the accounts of the year 1768, annually pass into, or out of, the Baltic, pay at the entrance of that sea about one per cent. upon all the commodities they are laden with. This species of tribute,

which, though difficult to collect, brings in to the state two millions five hundred thousand livres [104,166*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] is received in the bay of Elsinure, under the guns of the castle of Chronenburg. It is astonishing that the situation of this bay, and that of Copenhagen, should not have suggested the idea of forming a staple here, where all the commercial nations of the north and south might meet, and exchange the produce of their climates and their industry.

With the funds arising from tributes, domains, customs, and foreign subsidies, this state maintains an army of twenty-five thousand men, which is composed of foreigners, and is reckoned the very worst body of troops in Europe. On the other hand, its fleet is in the highest reputation. It consists of twenty-seven ships of the line, and of one-and-thirty ships of war, but of inferior rates. Twenty-four thousand registered seamen, most of whom are continually employed, form a certain resource for their navy. To their military expences, the government have of late years added others, for the encouragement of manufactures and arts. If we add to these, four millions of livres [166,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] for the necessary expences and amusements of the court, and about the same sum for the interest of the national debt, amounting to seventy millions [2,916,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] we shall account for the distribution of twenty-three millions of livres [958,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*] which form the revenue of the crown.

It was with a view of securing these several branches, that the government, in 1736, prohibited the use of jewels, and gold and silver stuffs: we may venture to say, there were plainer and easier means to be used for that purpose. They should have abolished that multitude of difficulties, which clog the commercial intercourse of the citizens, and hinder a free communication between the different parts of the kingdom. The trade of Iceland, of Greenland, of the states of Barbary, and the whale-fishery, should have been laid open to all the traders of the nation. The trade of the islands of Fero, absurdly given up to the sovereign, should have been restored to the people. All the members of the state should have been freed from the obligation that was imposed upon them in 1726, of providing themselves

with wine, salt, brandy, and tobacco, from Copenhagen itself.

In the present state of affairs, their exportations are but small. In the provinces on the German continent, they consist of five or six thousand beever, three or four thousand horses fit for cavalry, and some rye, which is sold to the Swedes and Dutch. For some years past, Denmark hath consumed all the wheat which Fionia and Aland used to export to other nations. Those two islands, as well as Zealand, have now no other traffic but in those magnificent harnesses which are purchased at so dear a rate by all who love fine horses. The trade of Norway consists of herrings, timber, masts, tar, and iron. Lapland and Greenland produce furs. From Iceland is procured cod, whale blubber, the oil of seals, and manatees, sulphur, and that luxurious down so celebrated under the name of eider-down.

¶ We shall close here the details into which the commerce of Denmark hath necessarily led us; and which are sufficient to convince that power, that nothing contributes so much to her interest as having the sole possession and traffic of all the productions of her American islands. Let us warn her, that the more limited her possessions are in the New World, the more attentive ought she to be, not to suffer any of the advantages she may derive from them to escape her: let us warn her, as well as all the governments of the earth, that the diseases of empires are not among the number of those which are cured of themselves; that they grow more inveterate with age, and that it is seldom their cure is facilitated by fortunate circumstances; that it is almost always dangerous to put off, to a distant period, either the accomplishing of any good purpose we may have in view, or the removal of any evil we may expect to remedy at the time: that for one instance of success obtained by temporising, history affords a thousand, where the favourable opportunity hath been missed for having been too long waited for; that the struggles of a sovereign are always those of a single man against all, unless there be several sovereigns, who have one common interest between them; that alliances are nothing more than preparations for treachery; that the power of a feeble nation grows only by imperceptible degrees, and by efforts which are al-

ways thwarted by the jealousy of other nations, unless it should emerge at once from its state of mediocrity by the daring exertions of some impatient and formidable genius; that a man of such genius may be waited for a long time, and that even he risks every thing, since his attempts may terminate equally in the aggrandizement of the state or in its total ruin. Let us warn Denmark in particular, that while she is expecting the appearance of this man of genius, the safest thing for her is to be sensible of her position, and the wisest, is to be convinced, that if powers of the first class seldom commit faults without impunity, the least negligence on the part of subaltern sovereignties, which have not any speedy or great resource in the possession of immense and opulent territories, cannot but be attended with fatal consequences. Let us not conceal from her, that all petty states are destined to aggrandize themselves or to disappear, and that the bird which dwells in a barren climate, and lives amidst arid rocks, ought to act as a bird of prey.

BOOK XIII.

SETTLEMENT OF THE FRENCH IN THE AMERICAN ISLANDS.

HISTORY entertains us with nothing but the accounts of conquerors, who have employed themselves at the expence of the lives and the happiness of their subjects in extending their dominions; but it doth not set before our eyes the example of one sovereign who hath thought of restraining the limits of them. Would not this measure, however, have been as prudent as the other has been fatal, and may we not judge of the extent of empires in the same manner as we do of the increase of population? A vast empire, and an immense population, may be two great evils. Let there

General considerations upon the establishment of colonies.

be few men, but let them be happy; let the empire be small, but well governed. The fate of small states is to be extended, and of large ones to be dismembered.

The increase of power, which most of the governments of Europe have flattered themselves with, from their possessions in the New World, hath for too long a time engaged my attention, not to have induced me frequently to consider within myself, or to inquire of men more enlightened, what idea it was proper to entertain of settlements formed at so much expence, and with so much labour, in another hemisphere.

Doth our real happiness require the enjoyment of the things which we go in search of at such a distance? Is it our fate for ever to persevere in such factitious inclinations? Is man born eternally to wander between the sky and the waters? Is he a bird of passage, or doth he resemble other animals, whose most distant excursions are exceedingly limited? Can the articles of commerce we derive from thence be an adequate compensation for the loss of the citizens who leave their country, to perish, either by the disorders with which they are attacked during their voyage, or by the climate at their arrival? At such considerable distance, what influence can the laws of the mother country have upon the subjects? and how will their obedience to those laws be enforced? Will not the absence of the witnesses and judges of our actions necessarily induce corruption in our manners, and occasion in time the subversion of the most wise institutions, when virtue and justice, which are the basis on which they are founded, shall no longer subsist? By what firm tie shall we secure a possession, from which we are separated by an immense interval? Hath the individual, who passes his whole life in voyages, any idea of the spirit of patriotism? and among all the countries he is obliged to traverse, is there any one which he still considers as his own? Can colonies interest themselves to a certain degree in the misfortunes or prosperity of the mother country? and can the mother country be very sincerely rejoiced or afflicted at the fate of the colonies? Do not the people feel a strong propensity, either of governing themselves, or of giving themselves up to the first power which hath strength enough to get possession of them? Are not the directors, sent over to govern them, considered as ty-

rants, who would be destroyed, were it not for the respect borne to the person whom they represent? Is not this extension of empire contrary to nature? and must not every thing that is contrary to nature have an end?

Would the man be considered as bereft of understanding, who should say to the nations: Your authority must either cease on the other continent, or you must make it the centre of your empire? This is the alternative you have to choose: you must either remain in this part of the world, and increase the prosperity of the land on which you are placed, and upon which you dwell; or if the other hemisphere should offer you more power, strength, security, or happiness, you must go and settle upon it. Convey to it your authority, and your arms, your manners and your laws will prosper there. Do ye think that your commands will be obeyed upon a spot where you do not reside, when the absence even of the master is always attended with some disagreeable circumstance in the narrow limits of his own family? The sway of a monarch can only be established in the kingdom where he dwells; and it is still no easy matter to reign there with propriety. Wherefore, O sovereign! hast thou assembled numerous armies in the centre of thy kingdom? Wherefore are thy palaces surrounded with guards? It is because the perpetual threats of thy neighbours, the submission of thy people, and the security of thy sacred person, require these precautions. Who will be responsible for the fidelity of your distant subjects? Your sceptre cannot reach to thousands of leagues, and your ships can but imperfectly supply this authority. This is the decree pronounced by fate upon your colonies: you must either renounce them, or they will renounce you. Consider, that your power ceases of itself, beyond the natural limits of your own dominions.

These ideas, which begin to arise in the minds of men, would have excited them to revolt at the commencement of the seventeenth century. Every thing was then in commotion in most of the countries of Europe. The thoughts of all men were generally turned towards the concerns of the New World, and the French appeared as impatient as other nations to take a share in them.

*First expeditions
of the French
to the American
islands.*

EVER since the fatal catastrophe of the assassination of the best of their kings, that nation had been in perpetual confusion, from the caprices of an intriguing queen, the oppressions of a rapacious foreigner, and the schemes of a weak minded favourite. A despotic minister began to enslave her; when some of her sailors, excited as much by a desire of independence, as by the allurements of riches, sailed towards the Caribbee islands, in hopes of making themselves masters of the Spanish vessels that frequented those seas. Their courage had been successful on many occasions; but they were at last obliged, in order to refit, to seek for an asylum, which they found at St. Christophers in 1625. This island appeared to them a proper place for securing the success of their expeditions, and they were therefore desirous of procuring a settlement upon it. Desnambuc, their chief, not only obtained leave to form an establishment there, but likewise to extend it as far as he was either desirous or was able to do, in the great archipelago of America. Government required, for this permission merely, without giving any assistance to the project, or encouraging it with any protection, the tenth part of the produce of every colony that might be founded.

*The French islands
are oppressed under
exclusive privileges.*

A COMPANY was formed in 1626, in order to reap the benefit of this concession. Such was the custom of those times, when trade and navigation were yet in too weak a state to be intrusted to private hands. This company obtained the greatest privileges. The government gave them, for twenty years, the property of all the islands they should cultivate, and empowered them to exact a hundred weight of tobacco, or fifty pounds of cotton, of every inhabitant from sixteen to sixty years of age. They were likewise to enjoy an exclusive right of buying and selling. A capital of forty-five thousand livres [1,875l.] only, and which was never increased to three times that sum, procured them all these advantages.

It seemed impossible to rise to any degree of prosperity with such inadequate means. Considerable numbers, however, of bold and enterprising men came from St. Christo-

phers, who hoisted the French flag in the neighbouring islands. Had the company, which excited this spirit of invasion by a few privileges, acted upon a consistent and rational plan, the state must soon have reaped some benefit from this restless disposition. But, unfortunately, an inordinate thirst of gain rendered them unjust and cruel; a consequence that ever has and ever will attend a spirit of monopoly.

The Dutch, apprised of this tyranny, came and offered provisions and merchandize on far more moderate terms, and made proposals which were readily accepted. This laid the foundation of a connection between those republicans and the colonists, that could never afterwards be broken; and formed a competition, not only fatal to the company in the New World, where it prevented the sale of their cargoes, but even pursued them in all the markets of Europe, where the contraband traders underfold all the produce of the French islands. Discouraged by these deserved disappointments, the company sunk into a total state of inactivity, which deprived them of most of their emoluments, without lessening any of their expences. In their despair, they gave up, in 1631, their charter to a new company, who in their turn ceded it also to another, in 1642. In vain did the ministry sacrifice to the last company the duties they had reserved to themselves; this indulgence could not change the pernicious system which had been hitherto the perpetual cause of all the calamities. A new revolution therefore soon became necessary. The exhausted company, to prevent their total ruin, and that they might not sink under the weight of their engagements, put their possessions up to auction: they were mostly bought up by their respective governors.

In 1649, Boisseret purchased, for seventy-three thousand livres [3,041l. 13s. 4d.] Guadaloupe, Marigalante, the island called *The Saints*, and all the effects belonging to the company on these several islands: he afterwards parted with half in favour of Houel, his brother-in-law. In 1650, Duparquet paid but sixty thousand livres [2,500l.] for Martinico, St. Lucia, Granada, and the Granadines. Seven years after, he sold Granada and the Granadines to Count Cerillac, for one third more than he had given for his whole

purchase. In 1651, Malta purchased St. Christophers, St. Martin, St. Bartholomew, Santa Cruz, and Tortuga, for forty thousand crowns [5,000*l.*] which were paid by the commandant De Poincy, who governed those islands. The knights of Malta were to hold them in fief of the crown, and were not allowed to intrust any but a Frenchman with the administration of them.

The new possessors enjoyed an unlimited authority, and disposed of the lands. All places, both civil and military, were in their gift. They had the right of pardoning those whom their deputies condemned to death; in a word, they were so many petty sovereigns. It was natural to expect, as their domains were under their own inspection, that agriculture would make a rapid progress. This conjecture was in some measure realized, notwithstanding the contests, which were necessarily sharp and frequent under such masters. However, this second state of the French colonies did not prove more beneficial to the nation than the first. The Dutch continued to furnish them with provisions, and to carry away the produce, which they sold indiscriminately to all nations, even to that which ought to have reaped the sole advantage of it, because it was her own property.

The mother country suffered considerably from this evil, and Colbert mistook the means of redress. That great man, who had for some time presided over the finances and trade of the kingdom, had begun upon a wrong plan. The habit of living with the farmers of the revenue under the administration of Mazarin, had accustomed him to consider money, which is but an instrument of circulation, as the source of every thing. He imagined that manufactures were the readiest way to draw it from abroad; and that in the workshops were to be found the best resources of the state, and in the tradesmen the most useful subjects of the monarchy. To increase the number of these men, he thought it proper to keep the necessaries of life at a low price, and to discourage the exportation of corn. The production of materials was the least object of his care, and he bent his whole attention to the manufacturing of them. This preference of industry to agriculture became the reigning taste, and unfortunately this destructive system still prevails.

Had Colbert entertained just notions of the improvement of lands, of the encouragement it requires, and of the liberty the husbandman must enjoy, he would have pursued, in 1664, a very different plan from that which he adopted. It is well known that he redeemed Guadaloupe, and its dependent islands, for one hundred and twenty-five thousand livres [5,208l. 6s. 8d.]; Martinico for forty thousand crowns [5,000l.]; Granada for a hundred thousand livres [4,166l. 13s. 4d.]; and all the possessions of Malta for five hundred thousand livres [20,833l. 6s. 8d.] So far his conduct deserved commendation: it was fit that he should restore so many branches of sovereignty to the body of the state. But he ought never to have submitted possessions of such importance to the oppressions of an exclusive company; a measure forbidden as much by past experience, as by reason. It is probable, that the ministry expected that a company, which was to be incorporated into those of Africa, Cayenne, and North America, and interested in the trade that was beginning to be carried on upon the coasts of St. Domingo, would obtain a strong and permanent power, as well from the great connections it would have an opportunity of forming, as from the facility with which it might repair, in one part, the misfortunes it had sustained in another. They thought to secure the future splendour of the company, by lending them the tenth part of the amount of their capital, free from interest for four years, by permitting the exportation of all provisions, duty free, into their settlements, and by prohibiting, as much as they could, the competition of the Dutch.

Notwithstanding all these favours, the company was never in any flourishing state. The errors they fell into seemed to increase, in proportion to the number of concessions that had been injudiciously granted to them. The knavery of their agents, the dejection of the colonists, the devastations of war, with other causes, concurred to throw their affairs into the utmost confusion. Their ruin was advancing, and appeared inevitable in 1674, when the state judged it proper to pay off their debts, which amounted to three millions five hundred and twenty-three thousand livres [146,791l. 13s. 4d.] and to reimburse them their capital of one million two hundred eighty-seven thousand one hundred and eighty-five livres [53,632l. 14s. 2d.] These generous terms restored

to the body of the state those valuable possessions which had been hitherto, as it were, alienated from it. The colonies became entirely French, and all the citizens, without distinction, were at liberty to go and settle there, or to open a communication with them.

The French islands recover their liberty. Obstacles which prevented their success.

IT would be difficult to express the transports of joy which this event excited in the islands. They were now freed from the chains under which they had so long been oppressed, and nothing seemed capable of abating, for the future, the active spirit of labour and industry. Every individual gave a full scope to his ambition, and thought himself at the eve of making an immense fortune. If they were deceived in these expectations, this cannot be attributed either to their presumption or their indolence. Their hopes were very natural, and their whole conduct was such as justified and confirmed them. Unfortunately, the prejudices of the mother country threw insurmountable difficulties in their way.

First, it was required, even in the islands, that every free man, and every slave of either sex, should pay an annual poll-tax of a hundred weight of raw sugar. It was in vain urged, that the condition imposed upon the colonies, to trade only with the mother country, was of itself a sufficient hardship, and a reason why they should be exempted from all other taxes. These representations were not attended to, as they ought to have been. Whether from necessity, or from ignorance on the part of government, those cultivators who ought to have been assisted with loans without interest, or with gratuities, saw part of their harvest collected by greedy farmers of the revenue; which, had it been returned into their own fertile fields, would gradually have increased their produce.

While the islands were thus deprived of part of their produce, the spirit of monopoly was taking effectual measures in France to reduce the price of what was left them. The privilege of buying it up, was limited to a few sea-ports. This was a manifest infringement of the essential rights vested in the other harbours of the kingdom; but to the colonies it proved a very unfortunate restriction,

because it lessened the number of buyers and sellers on the coasts.

To this disadvantage another soon succeeded. The ministry had endeavoured to exclude all foreign vessels from those distant possessions, and had succeeded, because they were in earnest. These navigators obtained, from motives of interest, the privilege that was denied them by the laws. They purchased of the French merchants passes to go to the colonies, where they took in their loadings, and carried them directly to their own country. This dishonesty might have been punished and suppressed by a variety of methods; but the most destructive one was adopted. All ships were required to give in their return, not only at home but likewise at the ports from whence they had sailed. This restraint necessarily occasioned a considerable expence to no purpose, and could not fail of enhancing the price of American commodities.

Their increase was also checked by the duties with which they were overladen; tobacco was subjected to a duty of twenty sols [10d.] per pound. The use of indigo was at first prohibited in the dyes of the kingdom, under a pretence that it spoiled them, and that it would be prejudicial to one of the cultures of the mother country. But when the most obstinate persons had been convinced by repeated experiments, that indigo, when mixed with pastel, or even when used alone, rendered the colours more beautiful and more lasting, government confined itself to the loading of it with taxes. They were so heavy as to render the exportation of it impossible. It was not till 1693, that the tax was taken off the indigo which was intended for foreigners.

The cacao was taken out of the hands of monopoly, only to be subjected, in 1693, to a duty of 15 sols [$7\frac{1}{2}$ d.] per pound, although it was sold for no more than 5 sols [$2\frac{1}{2}$ d.] in the colonies. Its introduction in the kingdom was at first allowed only by Rouen and Marseilles, and by this latter port alone, since the pretended liberty granted to it.

Cotton, which had at first escaped the rigours of the treasury, was taxed 3 livres [2s. 6d.] per hundred-weight in 1664. It was to no purpose that half of this impost

was taken off in 1691. This modification could not renew the plants that had been extirpated.

The consumption of ginger, which hath some of the qualities of pepper, and which might easily be used as a succedaneum, ought to have been encouraged. A stop was put to it by a duty of 6 livres [5s.] per quintal. It was afterwards reduced to 15 sols [7½d.]; but at that period, the lowest class of citizens had contracted a dislike for that spice, which it was impossible to conquer.

The American cassia was purchased in France for one quarter of the price that was paid for that of the Levant. If a proper analysis had been made of it, it would have dispelled the prejudices which were the cause of this enormous difference in the price. But government never thought of any expedient which might tend to increase the riches of their possessions.

Sugar was the richest production of the islands till 1669; the direct exportation of it into all the ports of Europe had been allowed, as well as that of all the provisions of the colonies. At this period it was ordered, that it should be only deposited in the harbours of the kingdom. This arrangement necessarily enhanced its price, and foreigners, who could purchase it at a cheaper rate in other parts, contracted the habit of going there in search of it. The resolution, however, that was taken of liberating the sugar from the duty of 3 per cent. which it had paid on its arrival, was the means of preserving some purchasers. A fresh mistake completed the ruin of this branch of trade.

The refiners, in 1682, petitioned that the exportation of raw sugar might be prohibited; in which they seemed to be influenced merely by public good. They alleged that it was repugnant to all sound principles, that the original produce should be sent away to support foreign manufactures, and that the state should voluntarily deprive itself of the profits of so valuable a labour. This plausible reasoning made too great an impression on Colbert; and the consequence of it was, that the refining of sugar was kept up at the same exorbitant price, and the art itself never received any improvement. This was not approved by the people who consumed this article; the French sugar-

trade sank, and that of the rival nations was visibly increased.

Some of the colonists, observing that the system was not dropped, notwithstanding this fatal experiment, solicited leave to fine their own sugars. They were supplied with so many conveniencies to go through this process at a trifling expence, that they flattered themselves they might soon recover that preference they had lost in the foreign markets. This change was more than probable, had not every hundred-weight of refined sugar they sent home been clogged with a duty of eight livres [6s. 8d.] on entering the kingdom. All that could be done, notwithstanding this heavy imposition, was to support the competition of the French refiners residing in the kingdom. The produce of the sugar-houses in France, and of those in the colonies, were entirely consumed within the empire; and thus an important branch of trade was given up, rather than it should be acknowledged, that a mistake had been committed in prohibiting the exportation of raw sugars.

From this period the colonies, which supplied twenty-seven millions weight of sugar, could not dispose of the whole of it in the mother country, which consumed but twenty millions. As the consumption of it decreased, no more was cultivated than was absolutely necessary. This medium could only be settled in process of time; and before this was effected, the commodity fell to an exceeding low price. This decrease in the value, which was also owing to the negligent manner of making it, was so great, that raw sugar, which sold for fourteen or fifteen livres [from 11s. 8d. to 12s. 6d.] per hundred in 1682, fetched no more than five or six [from 4s. 2d. to 5s.] in 1713.

The low price of the staple commodity would have made it impossible for the colonists to increase the number of their slaves, even if the government, by its conduct, had not contributed to this misfortune. The negro trade was always in the hands of exclusive companies, who imported but few, in order to be certain of selling them at a better price. We have good authority to assert, that in 1698 there were not twenty thousand negroes in those numerous settlements; and it may safely be affirmed, that most of these had been brought in by contraband traders. Fifty-four ships of a

moderate size were sufficient to bring over the whole produce of these colonies.

The French islands could not but sink under so many difficulties. If the inhabitants did not forsake them, and carry the fruit of their industry to other places, their perseverance must be attributed to resources that did not depend upon administration. When some production was oppressed, the planter turned his attention suddenly to another, which had not yet attracted the notice of the treasury, or which they were apprehensive of crushing in its infancy. The coasts were never sufficiently guarded to prevent all the connections formed with foreign navigators. The plunders of the freebooters were sometimes converted into advances for culture. At length the propensity which was daily increasing in the Old World for the productions of the New, greatly encouraged the multiplication of them. These means, however, would never have been sufficient to raise the French colonies from their state of languor. A great revolution was necessary, and it was brought about in 1716.

Measures adopted by the court of Versailles, to render their colonies useful.

At this period, a plain and simple regulation was substituted in lieu of a multitude of equivocal orders, which rapacious officers of the revenue had, from time to time, extorted from the wants and weakness of government. The merchandize destined for the colonies was exempted from all taxes. The duties upon American commodities designed for home consumption were greatly lowered. The goods brought over for exportation were to be entered and cleared out freely, upon paying three per cent. The duties laid upon foreign sugars were to be levied everywhere alike, without any regard to particular immunities, except in cases of re-exportation in the ports of Bayonne and Marseilles.

In granting so many favours to her remote possessions, the mother country was not unmindful of her own interests. All merchandize prohibited at home, was also forbidden in the colonies. To secure the preference to its own manufactures, it was enacted, that even such commodities as were not prohibited should pay duty on their entry into France,

although they were destined for the colonies. Salt beef alone, which the mother country could not furnish in competition, was exempted from this duty.

This regulation would have been as beneficial a one as the times would admit of, if the edict had allowed that the trade from America, which till then had been confined to a few sea-ports, should be general; and if it had released ships from the necessity of returning to the place from whence they came. These restraints limited the number of seamen, raised the expences of navigation, and prevented the exportation of the productions of the country. The persons who were then at the head of affairs ought to have been sensible of these inconveniencies, and no doubt intended one day to restore to trade that freedom and spirit which alone can make it flourish. They were probably forced to sacrifice their own views to the clamours of men in power, who openly disapproved of whatever opposed their own interest.

Notwithstanding this weakness, the colonists, who had reluctantly given up the hopes of an excellent soil, bestowed their utmost industry upon it, as soon as they were allowed that liberty. Their success astonished all nations. If government, on the arrival of the French in the New World, had only foreseen what they learned from experience a century later, the state might soon have enjoyed, from the advantages of cultivation, that wealth which would have added more to its prosperity than conquests; it would not then have been as much ruined by its victories as by its defeats. Those prudent ministers, who repaired the losses of war by a happy revolution in trade, would not have had the mortification to see that Santa Cruz was evacuated in 1696, and St. Christophers given up at the peace of Utrecht. Their concern would have been greatly heightened, could they have foreseen that in 1763 the French would be reduced to deliver up the Granades to the English. Strange infatuation of the ambition of nations, or rather of kings! After sacrificing thousands of lives to acquire and to preserve a remote possession, a greater number must still be lavished to lose it. Yet France has some important colonies left: let us begin with Guiana, which lies to windward of the rest.

*Notions concerning
Guiana. Motives
which induced the
Europeans to fre-
quent it.*

THE people who roved about this vast tract before the arrival of the Europeans, were divided into several nations, none of which were very numerous. Their manners were the same as those of the savages of the southern continent. The Caribs only, who from their numbers and courage were more turbulent than the rest, distinguished themselves by a remarkable custom in the choice of their chiefs. To be qualified to govern such a people, it was necessary a man should have more strength, more intrepidity, and more knowledge, than the rest of his brethren; and that he should give evident and public proofs of these superior qualifications.

The man, who aspired to the honour of commanding his brethren, was previously to be well acquainted with all the places fit for hunting and fishing, and with all the springs and roads. He was obliged to endure long and severe fasts; and was afterwards exposed to carry burthens of an enormous weight. He used to pass several nights as a centinel, at the entrance of the carbet or principal hut. He was buried up to the waist in an ant's nest, where he remained for a considerable time exposed to sharp and bloody stings. If in all these situations he shewed a strength and fortitude fit to support the dangers and hardships incident to the lives of savages; if he was one who could endure every thing, and fear nothing; he was declared fit to be their chief. He withdrew, however, as if conscious of what his intended dignity required, and concealed himself under thick bushes. The people went out to seek him in a retreat, which made him more deserving of the post he seemed to decline. Each of the assistants trode upon his head, to shew him, that, being raised from the dust by his equals, it was in their power to sink him into it again, if ever he should be forgetful of the duties of his station. Such was the ceremony of his coronation. Here we behold savages who had juster notions of sovereignty, and were better acquainted with their privileges, than most civilized nations are. After this political lesson, all the bows and arrows are thrown at his feet; and the nation was obedient to his laws, or rather to his example.

Such were the inhabitants of Guiana, when the Spaniard Alphonso de Ojeda first landed there in 1499, with Americus Vespucius and John de la Cosa. He went over a part of it; but this experiment afforded him only a superficial knowledge of so vast a country. Many others were undertaken at a greater expence, but they proved still more unsuccessful. They were, however, still continued, from a motive which ever did and ever will deceive mankind.

A report had prevailed, though its origin could not be discovered, that in the interior parts of Guiana there was a country known by the name of *El Dorado*, which contained immense riches in gold and precious stones; more mines and treasures than ever Cortez and Pizarro had found. This fable not only inflamed the ardent imagination of the Spaniards, but fired every nation in Europe.

Sir Walter Raleigh in particular, one of the most extraordinary men that ever appeared in a country abounding in singular characters, was seized with this enthusiasm. He was passionately fond of every thing that was magnificent; he enjoyed a reputation superior to that of the greatest men; he had more knowledge than those whose immediate pursuit was learning; he possessed a freedom of thinking uncommon in those days; and had a kind of romantic turn in his sentiments and behaviour. This determined him, in 1595, to undertake a voyage to Guiana; but he returned without discovering any thing relative to the object of his voyage. On his return, however, he published an account, full of the most brilliant impostures that ever amused the credulity of mankind.

So splendid a testimony, determined some Frenchmen, in 1604, to sail towards those countries under the direction of La Ravardiere. Other adventurers of their nation soon followed their example. They all submitted to incredible fatigues. At length some of them, rather discouraged by the infinite labours they underwent, than undeceived in their expectations, settled on the island of Cayenne.

SOME merchants of Rouen, thinking that this rising settlement might prove advantageous, united their stock in 1643. They intrusted their affairs in the hands of a man of a ferocious disposition, *The French settle in Guiana, and languish there during a century.*

named Ponce de Britigny, who, having declared war both against the colonists and the savages, was soon massacred.

This catastrophe having checked the ardour of the associates, a new company was established in 1651, which seemed to promise to be much more considerable than the former. They set out with so large a capital as to enable them to collect, in Paris itself, seven or eight hundred colonists. These embarked on the Seine, in order to sail down to Havre de Grace. Unfortunately, the virtuous Abbé de Marivault, who was the principal promoter of this undertaking, and was to have had the management of it as director-general, was drowned as he was stepping into his boat. Roiville, a gentleman of Normandy, who was going over to Cayenne as general, was assassinated in the passage. Twelve of the principal adventurers, who were the perpetrators of this act, and had undertaken to put the colony into a flourishing condition, behaved there in as atrocious a manner as might be expected from so horrid a beginning. They hanged one of their own number; two died; three were banished to a desert island; the rest abandoned themselves to every kind of excess. The commandant of the citadel deserted to the Dutch, with part of his garrison. The remainder, that had escaped hunger, poverty, and the fury of the savages, which had been roused by numberless provocations, thought themselves happy in being able to get over to the Leeward islands in a boat and two canoes. They abandoned the fort, ammunition, arms, and merchandize, with five or six hundred dead bodies of their wretched companions, fifteen months after they had landed on the island.

A new company was formed in 1663, under the direction of La Barre, master of requests. Their capital was no more than two hundred thousand livres [8,333l. 6s. 8d.] The assistance they obtained from the ministry enabled them to expel the Dutch, who, under the conduct of Spranger, had taken possession of the lands granted to them, after they had been evacuated by the first possessors. A year after, this inconsiderable body made a part of the great company, to which were united all those that the nation had formed for Africa and the New World. In 1667, Cayenne was insulted, pillaged, and abandoned, by the English; the colonists, who had fled from it, took posses-

sion of it again; and it was again taken from them in 1672 by the subjects of the United provinces, who could not keep it longer than to the year 1676. At this period they were driven out by the Marshal d'Etrées; but the colony hath not been attacked since.

This settlement, so often overturned, had but just begun to be re-established, and to enjoy some tranquillity, when great hopes were entertained of its success. Some pirates, laden with spoils they had gathered in the South seas, came and fixed there; and, what was of greater consequence, resolved to employ their treasures in the cultivation of the lands. It was probable that their plan would be prosecuted with vigour, because their means were great; when Ducasse proposed to them in 1688, the plundering of Surinam. This excited their natural turn for plunder; the new colonists became pirates again, and almost all the inhabitants followed their example.

The expedition proved unfortunate. Some of the besiegers fell in the attack; the rest were taken prisoners, and sent to the Caribbee islands, where they settled. The colony has never recovered this loss. Far from extending into Guiana, it has never been in a prosperous state at Cayenne.

This island, which is only parted from the continent by one river, which is divided into two branches, may be about fourteen or fifteen leagues in circumference. By a particular formation, very rarely to be met with in islands, the land is high near the waterside, and low in the middle. Hence it is intersected, with so many morasses, that all communication is almost impracticable. The only town in the colony is built in a plain of two miles in extent, where navigable canals might have been made with ease, though care hath not even been taken to drain the waters from it. This village consists of a number of barracks, heaped upon one another without order or convenience, where fevers are rather frequent in summer, notwithstanding the boasted salubrity of the spot. It is defended by a covered way, a large ditch, a mud rampart, and five bastions. In the middle of the town is rather a considerable eminence, of which a redoubt has been made, that is called the fort, where forty men might be able to capitulate after the place had been taken. The entrance into the harbour hath not much more than thirteen feet water. The ships might touch the

ground at fourteen feet, but fortunately the mud is soft, and the keel may be driven into it without danger.

The first productions of Cayenne were, the arnotto, cotton, and sugar. It was the first of all the French colonies that cultivated coffee; which was brought thither, as it hath always been, and perhaps is still believed, in 1721 by some deserters, who purchased their pardon by conveying it from Surinam, where they had taken refuge. An accurate historian hath lately affirmed, probably from authentic information, that this plant was a present of M. de la Motte Aigron, who, in 1722, had the dexterity to bring away from this Dutch settlement some fresh coffee berries, notwithstanding the strict prohibition there is against exporting any of them in the pods. Ten or twelve years after, cocoa was planted.

In 1752, 260,541 pounds weight of arnotto, 80,363 pounds of sugar, 17,919 pounds of cotton, 26,881 pounds of coffee, 91,916 pounds of cocoa, and 618 trees for timber, were exported from the colony. All these articles were the result of the labour of ninety French families, a hundred and twenty-five Indians, and fifteen hundred blacks; which made up the whole of the colony.

The court of Versailles intend to render Guiana flourishing. Such, and weaker still, was the state of Cayenne, when, in 1763, the court of Versailles endeavoured to render it extremely flourishing, by a system which occasioned a general astonishment. The French had then just emerged from the horrors of an unsuccessful war. The situation of affairs had determined the ministry to purchase peace with the cession of several important colonies. It appeared equally necessary to make the nation forget her distresses, and the errors that had been the cause of them. The prospect of better fortune might amuse the people, and silence their clamours; while their attention was removed from possessions the nation had lost, and turned towards Guiana, which, it was pretended, would compensate all their misfortunes.

This was not the opinion of the citizens who appeared to be the best informed of the situation of things. A settlement formed a century and a half before, at a period when the minds of men were impetuously urged to great

Book XIII. IN THE EAST AND WEST INDIES.

undertakings; a settlement, the labours of which had not been ruined by civil discords, nor by foreign wars; a settlement, which had been ruled by prudent directors, with attention and disinterestedness; a settlement, which had always experienced the favours of government and the assistance of trade; a settlement, where there was a constant and certain mart for the productions; yet, with all these advantages, this settlement was of no consequence. No plantation had ever been seen to flourish; no fortune had ever been raised in it. Misery and obscurity had obstinately attended at those periods, when the other French possessions in America astonished the Old and the New World by their splendour and by their riches. Its fate, far from being amended by time and by the advancement of knowledge, was become daily more unfortunate. How therefore could it possibly fulfil the important destiny that was prepared for it? These considerations did not restrain the ministry. Let us hear what hath been said in justification of their views.

America, when it was first invaded by Europe, exhibited to it two regions entirely different from each other, the torrid zone, and the temperate zone of the north. The first presented to the thirst of gold, innumerable objects of gratification; various allurements to cupidity, to idleness repose; to voluptuousness its incitement; to luxury its resources. That nation which first took possession of it, must have dazzled by its splendour, and seduced men by the image of its happiness. An opulence as striking as it was rapid, could not fail of giving it in the Old World an influence so much the more extensive, as the nature of true riches was unknown there, and as its rivals found themselves suddenly plunged into a state of relative indigence, as insupportable as that which is real. Its new domain was the country calculated for despotism. The heat prevailing there exhausted the strength of the body; and indolence, the necessary consequence of a fertility which supplies all wants without labour, deprived the soul of all its energy. This country submitted to its destiny. The people who inhabited it were slaves who waited for a master; he came, and ordered them to obey, and his commands were respected. The spirit of absolute monarchy was a production of the soil, which he found already formed there; but he al-

so found an impending enemy which nothing can resist, and which, in its turn, must necessarily subdue him ; this was the climate. In the first intoxication of conquest, the usurper formed the most extensive projects, and conceived hopes apparently the best founded. He considered the sign of wealth as the plastic and preserving principle of political strength ; and how is it possible that he should not have been deceived in this particular ? If we have got rid of this prejudice, it is perhaps to the disasters of that power that we owe this great lesson. They imagined, that with gold they could keep the nations in their pay, as they keep the negroes in their chains ; and never considered that this gold, which procured them jealous allies, would turn them into so many powerful adversaries ; who, uniting their arms with the riches they received, would make use of this double power to effect their ruin.

The temperate zone of North America could only attract free and laborious people. It furnishes no productions but what are common and necessary ; and which, for that very reason, are a constant source of wealth and strength. It favours population, by supplying materials for that quiet and peaceful species of husbandry which fixes and multiplies families ; and, as it does not excite inordinate desires, is a security against invasion. It reaches through an immense continent, and presents a large extent of country, on every side, open to navigation. Its coasts are washed by a sea which is generally navigable, and abounds with harbours. The colonists are not at so great a distance from the mother country ; they live in a climate more analogous to their own ; and a situation that is fit for hunting, fishing, husbandry, and for all the manly exercises and labours which improve the strength of the body, and are preservatives against the vices that taint the mind. Thus, in America, as in Europe, the north will have the superiority over the south. The one will be covered with inhabitants and plantations ; while the other will lavish its voluptuous liquors and its golden mines. The one will be able to civilize the savage nations by its intercourse with a free people ; the other will only produce a monstrous mixture of a race of slaves with a nation of tyrants, which can never acquire any degree of strength.

It was of great importance to the southern colonies to

have their resources for population and strength in the north, where they might exchange the commodities of luxury for those of necessity, and keep open a communication that might afford them succours if they were attacked; a retreat in case they were defeated, and a supply of land-forces to balance the weakness of their naval resources.

Before the last war, the French southern colonies enjoyed this advantage. Canada, by its situation, the warlike genius of its inhabitants, their alliances with the Indian nations in friendship with the French, and fond of the frankness and freedom of their manners, might balance, or at least give umbrage to New England. The loss of that great continent determined the French ministry to seek for support from one another. Guiana was thought a very proper situation for this purpose, if a free and national population could be established there, which might be able to resist foreign attacks, and, in course of time, to furnish a speedy assistance to the other colonies, when circumstances might require it.

Such was evidently the system of the minister. It never occurred to him, that a part of the world, thus inhabited, could never enrich the mother country by the produce of such commodities as are peculiar to the southern colonies. He was too intelligent not to know, that there is no such thing as selling, without complying with the general run of the market; and that this cannot be done but by producing saleable commodities at the same rate as other nations can afford them; and that labours, executed by free men, must of necessity bear a much higher price than those that are exacted from slaves.

The measures were directed by an active minister. As a wise politician, who does not sacrifice safety to wealth, he only proposed to raise a bulwark to protect the French possessions. As a philosopher, who feels for his fellow-creatures, who knows and respects the rights of humanity, he wished to people these fertile but desert regions with free men. But genius, especially when too impatient of success, cannot foresee every circumstance. The mistake proceeded from supposing, that Europeans would be able to undergo the fatigues of preparing lands for cultivation under the torrid zone; and that men, who quitted their own country only in hopes of living with greater satisfac-

tion in another, would accommodate themselves to the precarious subsistence of a savage life, in a worse climate than that which they had left.

This bad system, which the government was drawn into by a set of enterprising men, who were either misled by their presumption, or who sacrificed the public good to their own private views, was as extravagantly executed as it had been inconsiderately adopted. Every thing was blended together, without any principle of legislation, and without considering in what manner nature had adapted the several lands to the men who were to inhabit them. The inhabitants were divided into two classes, the proprietors and the mercenaries. It was not considered that this division, at present established in Europe, and in most civilized nations, was the consequence of wars, of revolutions, and of the numberless chances which time produces; that it was the effect of the progress of civilization, not the basis and foundation of society, which in its origin requires that all its members should have some property. Colonies, which are new populations and new societies, ought to adhere to this fundamental rule. It was broken through at the very first establishment of the colony, by allotting lands in Guiana to those only who were able to advance a certain fund for the cultivation of them. Others, whose desires were tempted with uncertain hopes, were excluded from this division of lands. This was an error equally contrary to sound policy and humanity. Had a portion of land been given to every new inhabitant that was sent over to this barren and desert country, each person would have cultivated his own spot, in proportion to his strength or abilities; one, by the means his money would have afforded him; another, by his own labour. It was necessary that those, who were possessed of a capital, should neither be discouraged, because they were men of great importance to a rising colony; nor that they should have an exclusive preference given them, lest it should prevent them from having assistants who might be willing to be dependent on them. It was also indispensably necessary, that every member of the new colony should be offered some property, with which he might employ his labour, his industry, his money, in a word, his greater or less powers to his advantage. It ought to have been foreseen, that Europeans, in

whatever situation they were, would not quit their own country, but with the hopes of improving their fortune; and that deceiving their hopes and confidence in this respect, would be an effectual way to ruin the colony intended to be established.

Men, who are transplanted into uncultivated regions, are surrounded with wants of every kind; the best-directed, and most continued labours, cannot prevent those, who go into those deserts to clear the lands, from being deprived of every resource, till the period, more or less distant, of the harvest arrives. Accordingly, the court of Versailles, by whom so striking a truth could not be unnoticed, engaged to support, indiscriminately, all the Germans, and all the French, who were intended to establish the population of Guiana. But this, though an act of justice, was not an act of prudence. It ought to have been foreseen, that the provisions would be ill-chosen by the agents of government. It ought to have been foreseen, that if they had even been chosen with zeal, prudence, and disinterestedness, most of them must unavoidably have been spoiled, either in the passage or on their arrival. It ought to have been foreseen, that salt meats, either well or ill preserved, would never be a proper food for unfortunate refugees, who had forsaken a wholesome and temperate climate, to live among the burning sands of the torrid zone, and to breathe the damp and rainy air of the tropics.

A judicious plan of policy ought to have attended to the multiplication of cattle, before it had thought of settling men there. This precaution would not only have insured a wholesome subsistence to the first colonists, it would likewise have supplied them with convenient instruments for the undertakings which are required in the formation of a new colony. With this assistance, they would have thought nothing of labours, which the ministry would have undertaken to pay liberally, and would have prepared habitations and provisions for those who were to come after them. By pursuing such measures, which could not require any depth of thought, the settlement which it was intended to form, would have acquired, in a short time, the consistence of which it was susceptible.

These very plain and natural reflections were never suggested. Twelve thousand men, after a tedious voyage,

were landed upon dreary and inhospitable shores. It is well known, that, almost throughout the torrid zone, the year is divided into two seasons, the dry and the rainy. In Guiana, such heavy rains fall from the beginning of November to the end of May, that the lands are either overflowed, or at least unfit for tillage. Had the new colonists arrived there in the beginning of the dry season, and been placed on the lands destined for them, they would have had time to put their habitations in order, to cut down or burn the woods, and to plough and sow their fields.

For want of these precautions, they knew not where to bestow such multitudes of people as were constantly pouring in just at the rainy season. The island of Cayenne might have been a proper place for the reception and refreshment of the new comers, till they could have been disposed of; there they might have found lodging and assistance. But the false opinion which prevailed, that the new colony must not be intermixed with the old, deprived them of this resource. In consequence of this prejudice, twelve thousand unfortunate men were landed on the islands Du Salut, or on the banks of the Kourou, and were placed under tents, or under miserable sheds. In this situation, totally inactive, weary of existence, and in want of all necessaries, exposed to contagious distempers, which are always occasioned by tainted provisions, and to all the irregularities which idleness necessarily produces among men of the lowest class, removed far from their native country, and placed under a foreign sky; they ended their wretched life in all the horrors of despair. Their fate will ever call aloud for vengeance on those who either invented or promoted so destructive a scheme, to which so many victims were sacrificed; as if the devastations of war, which they were intended to repair, had not swept away a sufficient number in the course of eight years.

That nothing might be wanting to complete this disaster, and that 25,000,000 of livres [1,041,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] employed in the success of this absurd system, might be entirely lost, the man who was commissioned to put an end to these various calamities, thought proper to bring back into Europe two thousand men, whose robust constitution had resisted the inclemency of the climate, and had enabled them to support greater miseries than are to be described.

The state hath fortunately had sufficient strength to bear these heavy losses. But how dreadful is it for our country, for the subjects, for every man who is interested in the lives of his fellow-citizens, to see them thus lavished upon ruinous enterprises, by an absurd jealousy of authority, which enjoins the most rigorous secrecy upon all public transactions ! Is it not then the interest of the whole nation, that her rulers should be well informed ? And how can they be so, but from collecting general information ? Why should projects, of which the people are to be both the object and the instrument, be concealed from them ? Can the will be commanded without the judgment, or can we inspire courage without confidence ? The only true information is to be obtained from public writings, where truth appears undisguised, and falsehood fears to be detected. Secret memoirs, private schemes, are commonly the work of artful and interested men, who insinuate themselves into the cabinets of persons in administration, by dark, oblique, and indirect, ways. When a prince or a minister has acted according to the opinion of the public, or of enlightened men, if he be unfortunate, he cannot on any account be blamed. But, when enterprises are undertaken without the advice, or against the sense, of the people ; when events are brought on unknown to those whose lives and fortunes are exposed by them ; what can this be but a secret league, a combination of a few individuals against society in general ? Can it be possible, that authority should think itself degraded by an intercourse with the citizens ? Or will men in power for ever treat the rest of mankind with so great a degree of contempt, as not even to desire that the injuries they have done them should be forgiven ?

What has been the consequence of that catastrophe, in which so many subjects, so many foreigners, have been sacrificed to the illusions of the French ministry with respect to Guiana ? This unhappy climate has been inveighed against with all the rancour with which resentment and misfortune can aggravate its real evils. Fortunately, the observations of a few enlightened men enable us to clear up this confusion.

Idea that must be formed of the coasts and of the soil of Guiana. THIS vast country, which was decorated with the magnificent title of Equinoxial France, is not the sole property of the court of Versailles, as they formerly pretended. The Dutch, by settling to the north, and the Portuguese to the south, have confined the French between the rivers of Marony and Vincent Pinçon, or Oyapock, which interval still forms a space of more than a hundred leagues.

The seas which water this long extent of coast, are safe, open, and free from any obstacle which might impede navigation. There are only the islands Du Salut, at three leagues distance from the continent, to be seen in them. As they are divided only by a channel of fourscore toises, they might be easily united, and after their junction they would form a sufficient shelter for the largest ships. Nature hath disposed things in such a manner, that the port might be rendered impregnable at a trifling expence, with the materials which are to be found upon the spot. From this harbour, which abounds in turtles part of the year, and which is situated to windward of the archipelago of America, a squadron might, in time of war, sail in the space of seven or eight days to the assistance of the national possessions, or to attack those belonging to the enemies of France.

There is no danger to be feared in these latitudes. The winds are generally favourable for approaching the coasts, as much or as little as one may choose. If the contrary should happen, which is extremely uncommon; or if there should be a calm, the ships have the resource of anchoring everywhere upon an excellent bottom.

These advantages are unfortunately accompanied with a few inconveniencies. The navigators are obstructed, on their coming in, by rapid currents. If, in order to avoid them, they should go too near the land, they would find almost everywhere a deficiency of water. There is not any to be found, even at the mouth of the rivers, which can receive none but very small ships. The river Aprouague is the only one which is twelve feet deep. In this river the vessels may be run aground upon a soft bottom, and may undergo all the necessary repairs, without creating any anxiety. It is necessary, however, to make great dispatch,

because the best constructed and best fitted out vessels, are destroyed in a small space of time, by the worms, by the muddy waters, by the rains, and by the heats.

In this region, though near the equator, the climate is very supportable. This temperature may be attributed, perhaps, to the length of the nights, and to the abundance of fogs and dews. Guiana never experiences those suffocating heats which are so common in many other countries of America.

Unfortunately, this colony is destroyed by deluges of water, during the first six months of the year, and sometimes longer. These superabundant rains level the elevated situations, drown the plains, destroy the plants, and frequently suspend the most urgent labours. Vegetation is at that time so powerful, that it is impossible to restrain it within proper limits, whatever numbers of people may be employed for that purpose. To this calamity succeeds another, and that is a long drought, which opens and parches up the ground.

Various have, for a long time, been the opinions concerning the soil of Guiana. It is known at present, that it is mostly a stony turf, covered over with sand, and with the remains of some vegetables. These grounds are worked with facility, but their produce is very trifling, and even does not last longer than five or six years. The planter is then obliged to till new grounds, which undergo the same fate as the former. Those tillages even, which are executed in some parts of a deeper soil, which is to be found at intervals, do not last long, because the repeated rains, which fall in torrents in those regions, soon wash away the juice that might render them fruitful.

It was upon these meagre plains that the first French, who were driven to Guiana by a fatal destiny, formed a settlement. The generations which succeeded them searched for more fertile territories in all parts, but could not find any. In vain did the treasury make several great sacrifices to improve this colony. These expences were unavailing, because they could not alter the nature of things. The example of the Dutch, who, after having languished in the neighbourhood upon the high grounds, had at last succeeded upon plantations formed in morasses, which were drained off with immense labour, did not make any im-

pression. At length M. Mallouet, being intrusted with the administration of this unfortunate settlement, hath himself carried into execution what he had seen practised at Surinam; and the place which he had rescued from the ocean was immediately covered with provisions. This circumstance hath inspired the colonists with a spirit of emulation, of which they were not thought to be susceptible, and they wait only for the favourable assistance of government, to enrich the mother country with their productions.

The plantations will be hereafter established upon those territories that are formed by levelling of the mountains, and by the sea. It will be necessary to dry up the morasses, to dig canals, and to construct dikes. But why should the French be apprehensive of undertaking what they have executed with so much success upon their own frontiers? Why should the court of Versailles refuse to encourage, by loans and by gratifications, labours of tillage that are really useful? It is in the clearing of the lands that consists the true conquest over chaos, for the advantage of all mankind; and not in the obtaining of provinces, which are depopulated and laid waste, in order that we may acquire them; which lavish the blood of two nations, without enriching either; and which must be maintained at a great expence, and covered for ages with troops, before we can flatter ourselves with the peaceable possession of them.

Every thing invites the French ministry to pursue the plan which we have ventured to propose. The subterraneous fires, which are so common in the rest of America, are at present extinguished in Guiana. There are never any earthquakes, neither do hurricanes exercise their ravages upon those coasts. The access to this country is attended with so many difficulties, that we may foretel it will not be conquered. The French islands, on the contrary, which have already been once taken, attract the attention, and incite the cupidity, of a nation, highly dissatisfied with having restored them. This circumstance makes us presume, that they will always be disposed to repair, by force of arms, the defects of their negociations. The well-grounded confidence they repose in their navy, may perhaps soon precipitate them into a new war, in order that they may regain what they have restored, and extend their

usurpations still further. Should fortune again favour their enterprises: should a people, encouraged by victories, of which the citizens alone reap the advantages, be for ever triumphant over a nation which fights for their kings only; Guiana would at least prove a great resource, where all the productions which are become necessary by habit, might be cultivated; for which an enormous tribute must be paid to foreigners, if the colonies of the nation were unable to furnish them.

The drying up of the coasts of Guiana would require long and difficult labours. Where can a sufficient number of men be found for the accomplishment of this undertaking?

It was thought in 1763, that the Europeans would be fit for this purpose. Twelve thousand of them were the victims of this opinion. About sixty German, or Acadian families, alone escaped the catastrophe. They settled upon the

What men could be employed for the cultures of which Guiana is susceptible.

Sinamary, the banks of which are never overflowed by the sea, and where there are some natural meadows, and a great quantity of turtles. This small colony increases, and lives happily along the side of that river. Their resources consist of fishing, hunting, breeding of cattle, and the culture of a small quantity of rice and of maize. Some speculative persons have concluded from this instance, that white people might be able to cultivate Guiana; but they have not considered, that colonies have been founded only for the purpose of obtaining vendible commodities; and that these commodities require labours, more constant and more fatiguing than those which are cultivated on the borders of the Sinamary.

The natives of the country might, it is said, execute without inconvenience those labours which are fatal to us. These savages were sufficiently numerous upon the coast when it was discovered; but their number hath been so much diminished by European cruelties, that there are at present no more than four or five hundred of them capable of bearing arms. But some adventurers, who have lately penetrated into the inland countries, have discovered several small nations, each more barbarous than the other. They

have everywhere perceived the oppression of the women, superstitions which prevent the increase of population, animosities which can only be extinguished by the entire destruction of families and of colonies; the shocking neglect of old and of sick people; the habitual use of the most various and the most subtle poisons, and a multitude of other evils, the hideous spectacle of which is too generally displayed in a state of nature. Travellers, however, are received with respect, and assisted with the most unbounded generosity and the most affecting simplicity. They enter into the hut of the savage, sit down by the side of his naked wife and daughters, partake of their repast, and repose upon the same bed. The next day they are laden with provisions, and accompanied to some distance on their journey by the savages, from whom they part with demonstrations of friendship. But this hospitable scene may become bloody in an instant. The savage is jealous to excess, and on the least sign of familiarity which would alarm him, he would put his guest to death.

The first step to be taken would be, to collect these perpetually wandering people. This measure might be facilitated, by distributing in a proper manner a few presents, suited to their taste. The most scrupulous attention should be exerted, to avoid bringing together in the same place such of these nations as have an insurmountable aversion to each other.

These colonies should not be casually formed. It would be proper to distribute them in such a manner as to be able to penetrate, with ease, into the inland parts. In proportion as these settlements shall acquire strength, they will facilitate the establishment of new habitations.

No consideration hath yet been powerful enough to fix these Indians. The best way to succeed, would be to distribute cows among them, which they would not be able to feed, without cutting down woods, in order to form pasture grounds. The vegetables and the fruit-trees with which their habitation would be enriched, might prove a further inducement to them to give up their wandering life. It is probable that these resources, the advantage of which they have never known, might disgust them, in time, of hunting and fishing, which are at present the only support of their miserable and precarious existence.

There would still remain a much more fatal prejudice to subdue. It is an idea generally adopted among nations, that sedentary occupations are suitable to women only. This senseless pride degrades all kinds of labours in the eyes of the men. An intelligent missionary might employ his time to advantage, in combating this infatuation. He would ennoble the labours of agriculture, by exercising them himself with his children; and by this great and fortunate stratagem, he would succeed in diffusing a new system of morality among the young men. It might, perhaps, be also possible to overcome the indolence even of the parents, if it could be contrived to excite their desires. It is not improbable but that they would cultivate provisions, in order to barter them against some other mercantile articles, which might have become necessary to them from habit.

This salutary end would be far from being answered, if the savages, when collected together, were subjected to a poll-tax, and to the labours of vassalage, as they have been by the Portuguese and the Spaniards, upon the borders of the Amazon, of the Rio-negro, and of the Oroonoko. These people must have been suffered to enjoy, for ages, the benefits of cultivation, before they should be obliged to bear the burthens of it.

But even after this happy revolution, Guiana would still but very imperfectly fulfil the extensive views which the court of Versailles may have. The feeble hands of the Indians will only bring forth commodities of moderate value. In order to obtain rich productions, it will be necessary to have recourse to the strong arms of the negroes.

The facility which these slaves will have of deserting their manufactures, excites apprehensions. They will take refuge, they will gather together, they will intrench themselves, it is said, in vast forests, where the plenty of game and of fish will supply them with an easy subsistence; where the heat of the climate will allow them to go without clothes; and where they will never want for wood fit to make bows and arrows. One hundred of them had taken this resolution about thirty years ago. The troops sent to reduce them again to subjection were repulsed. This check excited the apprehensions of a general desertion, and consternation prevailed throughout the colony. They were

uncertain what measures to pursue; when a missionary set out, attended by a single negro, arrived at the spot where engagement had taken place, raised up an altar, assembled all the deserters by ringing a bell, said mass to them, harangued them, and brought them all back, without exception, to their former masters. But the jesuits, who had merited and obtained the confidence of these unfortunate people, are no longer in the colony; and their successors have not shewn either the same activity, or an equal knowledge of the human heart. Nevertheless, it would not, perhaps, be impossible to prevent the evasion of these unhappy victims of our cupidity, by rendering their condition supportable. The law of necessity, which commands even tyrants, will establish in this region a spirit of moderation, which humanity alone ought to excite everywhere.

This new arrangement of things would engage the government in considerable expences. Before they enter upon them, they will examine whether the colony hath hitherto obtained from nature that kind of constitution which was necessary to make it prosper, and whether Cayenne be the most suitable place to become the capital of a large establishment. This indeed is our opinion: but some able men think otherwise, and their arguments must be discussed.

These views may be excellent: and yet it is not a matter of surprise that the advantages of them should not have been sooner perceived. The discernment of some things is attended with so much difficulty, that it can only be surmounted by experience, or by genius. But the progress of experience is slow, and requires time; and genius, which, like the coursers of the gods, clears an immense interval at one leap, may be expected for ages. When it appears, it is either rejected or persecuted; and when it speaks, it is not heard. If it should by chance be attended to, the spirit of jealousy inveighs against its projects, and traducing them as sublime reveries, makes them abortive. The general interest of the multitude might, perhaps, supply the penetration of genius, if it were suffered freely to exert its influence; but it is incessantly thwarted by authority; the depositaries of which, while they understand nothing, pretend to regulate every thing. Who is the man whom they will honour with their confidence, and with

their intimacy? It is the impudent flatterer, who, without believing it, will be continually repeating to them, that they are a set of wonderful beings. The mischief is first done by their folly, and is perpetuated by a spirit of false shame, which prevents them from acknowledging their errors. False combinations are exhausted, before they have discovered the true ones, or before they can resolve to approve, after having rejected them. Thus it is that the evil prevails, by the childishness of the sovereigns, by the incapacity and pride of the ministers, and by the impatience of the victims. One might be comforted with respect to past and present misfortunes, if the future were to produce an alteration in this destiny: but this is a hope with which it is impossible to flatter ourselves. And if the philosopher were asked, of what use are the counsels which he persists in giving to nations, and to those who govern them, and that he were to answer with sincerity, he would say, that he is only satisfying an invincible propensity to declare the truth, at the risk of exciting general indignation, and even of being obliged to drink the cup of Socrates.

It would be proper to fix the yet unfettled boundaries of Guiana, before any final resolution be taken respecting this colony. The Dutch are very desirous of extending the frontiers of Surinam to the north, as far as the banks of the Sinamary; but the military post which the court of Versailles have caused to be established upon the right bank of the river Maroni, seems entirely to have set aside this ancient pretension. Towards the south, the difficulties are still greater. The Amazon was formerly, without dispute, the boundary of the French possessions; since by a treaty of the 4th March 1700, the Portuguese engaged to demolish the forts which they had erected upon the left bank of that river. At the peace of Utrecht, France, which was under subjection, was compelled to cede the navigation of that river, together with the lands which extend as far as the river Vincent Pinçon, or the Oyapock. When the time fixed for the execution of the treaty arrived, it was found, that these two words, which were employed as synonymous, were described in the country, as well as in ancient maps, as two rivers thirty leagues distant from each other. Both courts were equally desirous of turning this error to their own advantage. The court of Lisbon,

wished to extend its boundaries as far as the Oyapock, and that of Versailles as far as Vincent Pinçon. Nothing could be determined upon, and the contested lands have remained desert ever since that rather remote period.

We will not presume to decide this important question. The only observation we shall allow ourselves to make, will be, that the motive of the cession required by Portugal, was to secure to it the exclusive trade upon the Amazon. The subjects of this crown will therefore possibly enjoy this advantage; by restraining the limits of the French possessions only twenty leagues, and as far as to the river of Vincent Pinçon; without its being necessary to push them back to the distance of fifty leagues, as far as the Oyapock.

Present state of French Guiana. EVERY thing still remains to be done at Guiana; there are no more than thirty plantations at Cayenne itself, and almost all of them are in a miserable condition. The continent is in a still worse state than the island. The habitations are often moved. They are separated by immense deserts. Placed at a greater distance from the general mart, they have no facility for bartering their commodities. They enjoy none of the conveniences which men, when collected together, mutually procure to one another. The laws, the police, decency, emulation, the influence of the ministry; none of these advantages are known there. In 1775 there were no more than thirteen hundred free men, and eight thousand slaves, for the clearing of an extent of one hundred leagues of coast. The productions of the colony were even inadequate to these trifling means, because in the manufactures there were none but white men without understanding, and negroes who were under no kind of subordination. The commodities which were taken away, by the vessels that came from North America, from Guadaloupe, and from Martinico, did not amount to 100,000 livres [4,166l. 13s. 4d.] and France received upon six vessels only forty quintals of sugar, which were sold in Europe for 2,156 livres [89l. 16s. 8d.] six hundred and fifty-eight quintals, fourscore and eight pounds of coffee, which were sold for 31,296 livres 16 sols [1,304l. 8d.] three quintals thirty-four pounds of indigo, which were sold for 2,839

livres [118l. 5s. 10d.] one hundred and fifty-two quintals forty-one pounds of cacao, which were sold for 10,668 livres 16 sols [444l. 16s. 8d.] three thousand and three quintals fifty-five pounds of arnotto, which were sold for 187,706 livres 7 sols 6 deniers [7,821l. 11s. 11½d.] nine hundred and seventy-two quintals sixty pounds of cotton, which were sold for 243,150 livres [10,131l. 5s.] three hundred and fifty-three hides, which were sold for 3,177 livres [132l. 7s. 6d.] fourteen hundred and twenty-two quintals eight pounds of wood, which were sold for 7,604 livres three sols nine deniers [316l. 16s. 10d.] which made, upon the whole, 488,598 livres 3 sols 3 deniers [about 20,388l. 5s. 2d.] The 600,000 livres [2,500l.] which were spent by the court, in this as well in other years, for this ancient establishment, served to pay for what had been received beyond these exportations. At this period Cayenne was indebted 2,000,000 livres [83,333l. 6s. 8d.] to the government, or to the merchants, of the mother country.

Something may be expected from the knowledge which M. de Mallouet hath diffused through the colony, and from the encouragements which this able administrator hath granted in 1777 to those colonists who should devote their labours to the felling of wood for ship-building, to the culture of articles of subsistence, to the salting of fish, and to some other productions of little value, for which he hath insured them a market. Greater expectations are still raised from the spice trees. The clove tree hath already yielded cloves, which are very little inferior to those that come from the Moluccas; and every thing seems to promise that the nutmeg tree will thrive as well. But nothing great can be undertaken without a capital; and, indeed, without a considerable one.

This capital is in the hands of a rich company, which hath been formed, but without any exclusive privilege for this part of the world. This association, the original funds of which consist of 2,400,000 livres [100,000l.] hath obtained from government the vast space which extends from the river Aprouage to the Oyapock; and every encouragement which could reasonably be granted them, to fertilize this soil, which is considered as the best of Guiana. Till their success shall enable them to employ themselves in

draining the morasses, and in cultures of importance, this powerful association have turned their views towards the felling of wood, the multiplication of cattle, and the cultivation of cotton, and of cacao, but principally of tobacco.

Some slaves have for a long time cultivated, for their own use, round their huts, this last mentioned plant. It hath the same properties as the tobacco of the Brazils, which sells to advantage in all the European markets, and which is absolutely requisite for the purchase of negroes, upon a great part of the coasts of Africa. If this undertaking should succeed, the wants of France will be diminished, and its navigators will not be obliged to go to Lisbon for that part of their cargo. The expectations arising from St. Lucia are founded upon a different basis.

The possession of St. Lucia, for a long time disputed, is at last ceded to the French. THE English took possession of this island, without opposition, in the beginning of the year 1639. They lived there peaceably for a year and a half, when a ship of their own nation, which had been overtaken by a calm off Dominica, carried off some Caribs, who were come in their canoes to bring them fruit. This violence occasioned the savages of St. Vincent and Martinico to join the offended savages; and in August 1640, they all attacked the new colony. In their fury, they massacred every one that opposed them. The few who escaped their vengeance, quitted, for ever, a settlement that was only in its infant state.

In the first ages of the world, before civil societies were formed and polished, all men in general had a common right to every thing upon earth. Every one was free to take what he chose for his own use, and even to consume it, if it were of a perishable nature. The use that was thus made of a common right, supplied the place of property. As soon as any one had in this manner taken possession of any thing, it could not be taken from him by another without injustice. It was in this point of view, which can only be applied to the primitive state of nature, that the European nations considered America when it was first discovered. They paid no regard to the natives, and imagined they were sufficiently authorised to seize upon any country, if no other nation of our hemisphere were in possession of

it. Such was constantly and uniformly the only public right observed in the New World, and which men have not scrupled to avow, and attempt to justify, in this century during the late hostilities.

Is not then the nature of property the same everywhere ; is it not everywhere founded upon possession acquired by labour, and upon a long and peaceable enjoyment ? Europeans, can you then inform us, at what distance from your residence the sacred title becomes abolished ? Is it at the distance of a few steps, of one league, or of ten leagues ? You will answer in the negative ; in which case it cannot possibly be even at the distance of ten thousand leagues. Do you not perceive, that while you arrogate to yourselves this imaginary right over a distant people, you confer it at the same time to those distant people over yourselves ? Nevertheless, would you say, if it were possible that the savages should enter upon your country, and reasoning in the same manner as you do, should say, this land is not inhabited by our own people, and therefore it belongs to us. You hold the system of Hobbes in abhorrence among your neighbouring country ; and yet this fatal system, which makes of strength the supreme law, you practise it at a distance. After having been thieves and assassins, nothing remained to complete your character, but that you should become, as you really are, a set of execrable sophists.

According to these principles, which must always be reprobated by just and upright men, St. Lucia was to belong to any power that could or would people it. The French attempted it first. They sent over forty inhabitants in 1650, under the conduct of Rousséban, a brave, active, prudent, man, and singularly beloved by the natives, on account of his having married one of their women. His death, which happened four years after, put a stop to the general good he had begun to effect. Three of his successors were murdered by the Caribs, who were dissatisfied with their behaviour to them ; and the colony was declining when it was taken in 1664 by the English, who evacuated it in 1666.

They had scarce left it, when the French appeared again on the island. Whatever was the cause, they had not greatly increased their number, when the enemy, that had before driven them out, again forced them to quit their

habitations twenty years after. Some, instead of evacuating the island, took refuge in the woods. As soon as the conquerors, who had made only a temporary invasion, were gone, they resumed their labours only for a short time. The war, which soon after raged in Europe, made them apprehensive that they might fall a prey to the first privateer that should be desirous of plundering them; with a view, therefore, of obtaining greater tranquillity, they removed to other French settlements, which were either stronger, or might expect to be better defended. There was then no regular culture or colony in St. Lucia. It was only frequented by the inhabitants of Martinico, who came hither to cut wood and to build canoes, and who had considerable docks in the island.

Some soldiers and sailors having deserted thither after the peace of Utrecht, Marshal d'Estrées petitioned for a grant of the island. No sooner was it obtained in 1718, then he sent over a commandant, troops, cannon, and inhabitants. This gave umbrage to the court of London, which had a kind of claim to this island from prior settlement, as that of Versailles had from almost uninterrupted possession. Their complaints determined the French ministry to order that things should be put into the same condition they were in before the grant. Whether this compliance did not appear sufficient to the English, or whether it gave them room to think they might attempt any thing, they themselves gave St. Lucia, in 1722, to the duke of Montague, who was sent to take possession of it. This clashing of interests occasioned some disturbances between the two courts; which was settled, however, by an agreement made in 1731, that, till the respective claims should be finally adjusted, the island should be evacuated by both nations; but that both should have the liberty to wood and water there.

This agreement did not prevent the French from fixing there again a commandant, a garrison, and batteries. The court of London were either not informed of this breach of faith, or they overlooked it, because this channel was useful to their navigators, to assist them in carrying on with richer colonies a smuggling trade, which the subjects of both governments thought equally advantageous to them. This trade has been more or less considerable till the treaty

of 1763, which secured to France the long and obstinately contested property of St. Lucia.

THE first use which the court of Versailles proposed to make of their acquisition, was to establish a magazine there. Since their windward islands had cut down their forests, extended their cultures, and lost the resources they used to derive from Canada and from Louisiana, it had been impossible for them to do without the woods and cattle of North America. It was thought great inconveniences would attend the direct admission of these foreign assistances; and St. Lucia was fixed upon as a very proper place for the exchange of these commodities against the molasses of Martinico and Guadaloupe. Experience soon shewed that this scheme was impracticable.

In order that this arrangement might be carried into execution, it would be necessary that the Americans should either deposit their cargoes in storehouses, keep them on-board, or sell them to traders settled on the island; three things equally impossible.

These sailors will never consent to land their cattle, as the expences they would incur for having them taken care of, for their food, or to secure them from accidents, would infallibly ruin them. Neither will they pay for warehouses for their wood, which is too cheap and too bulky a commodity to be worth the charge of store-room. They will never wait on-board their ships for distant purchasers who might not arrive, nor will they ever meet with intermediate purchasers, whose profits would necessarily absorb so much, that it would be impossible to employ them.

The proprietors of molasses have the same reasons to dislike this mart. The carriage, the leakage, and commission, would reduce their commodities to nothing. If the English should determine to pay a higher price for the molasses, they must consequently raise that of their own merchandize; and after this advance, the consumer would not purchase them.

The French ministry, undeceived as to their first notion, without entirely giving it up, attended, since 1763, to the formation of cultures in St. Lucia. This plan was a prudent one, but it was not executed in a proper manner.

Had the governor and the intendant of Martinico, from which this island is no more than seven leagues distant, been intrusted with this business, the colonists, who would have been sent there, would have obtained the succours which can be furnished with ease, by a settlement that hath existed more than a century. Precipitation, a passion for novelty, the desire of providing for friends or favourites, and other motives perhaps still more blameable, made the government prefer the sending of an independent administration, who were to have no connections but with the mother country. This erroneous system cost the treasury 7,000,000 of livres [291,666l. 13s. 4d.] and to the state seven or eight hundred men, whose unhappy fate is more a matter of pity than surprise. Under the tropics, the best established colonies always destroy one third of the soldiers that are sent thither, though they are healthy stout men, and find good accommodations. It is not surprising then, that a set of miserable wretches, the refuse of Europe, and exposed to all the hardships of indigence and all the horrors of despair, should most of them perish in an uncultivated and uninhabited island.

The advantage of peopling this colony was reserved to the neighbouring settlements. Some Frenchmen, who had sold, upon very profitable terms, their plantations at the Granades to the English, brought part of their capital to St. Lucia. Several planters from St. Vincents, incensed at being obliged to buy lands which they themselves had been at an incredible pains to clear and fertilize, took the same step. Martinico also furnished some inhabitants, whose possessions were either not sufficiently fertile, or too much confined, and merchants who have withdrawn part of their stock from trade in order to devote it to husbandry. Lands have been gratuitously distributed to all of them.

Opinion that may be formed of St. Lucia. THIS would have been but a fatal present, if the prejudice which prevailed against St. Lucia had had any foundation.

It was said, that nature had refused it every advantage necessary to form a colony of any importance. In the opinion of the public, its dry, uneven, and stony, soil, could never pay the expences of manuring. The inclemency of the climate would infallibly destroy every man, who, from a strong desire of enriching himself,

or who driven by despair, should be bold enough to go there. These notions were generally received.

The fact is, that the soil of St. Lucia is not bad on the borders of the sea, and that it becomes better the further one advances in the country. The whole of the island may be cultivated, except some high and craggy mountains, which bear evident marks of ancient volcanoes. In one deep valley there are still eight or ten hollow places of some feet in diameter, where the water boils up in a most dreadful manner. There are not indeed many extensive plains in the island, but several small ones, where sugar may be cultivated with success. The shape of the island, which is long and narrow, will make the carriage easy wherever the canes are planted.

The air in the inland parts of St. Lucia, is the same as it was in all the other islands before they were inhabited; foul and unwholesome at first, but less noxious, as the woods are cleared, and the ground laid open. The air, on some part of the sea-coast, is more unhealthy. On the leeward side the lands receive some small rivers, which springing from the foot of the mountains, have not a slope sufficient to wash down the sands with which the influx of the ocean chokes up their mouths. Stopped by this insurmountable barrier, they spread themselves into unwholesome morasses upon the neighbouring grounds. So obvious a reason had been sufficient to drive away the few Caribs who were upon the island when it was first discovered. The French, driven into the New World by a more powerful motive than even self-preservation, have been less careful than the savages. It is upon this very spot that they chiefly fixed their plantations. Several of them have been punished for their rapaciousness. Others will be so hereafter, unless they construct dikes and dig channels to drain off the waters. Government hath already set the example of this in the principal part of the island; some citizens have followed it, and it is to be imagined, that so useful a practice will in time become general.

THERE are already eleven parishes in the colony, almost all of them to leeward. This preference given to one part of the island, is not for the sake of a better soil, but for the conveniency of the shipping. In time that

Present state of the colony of St. Lucia.

part that was neglected at first, will likewise be inhabited, as bays are continually discovered, in which canoes may put in and receive all kinds of commodities on-board.

A road which goes all round the island, and two others that cross it from east to west, are very convenient for carrying the produce of the plantations to the landing places. In process of time, and with some expence, these roads will be brought to a much greater degree of perfection than it was possible they should be at first, without running into expences too burthenfome for a settlement in an infant state. The labours of vassalage required for making the roads, have unavoidably retarded the culture of the lands, and excited great complaints; but the colonists now begin to bless the wise and steady hand that has ordered and conducted this work for their benefit. Their burthen hath been in some degree alleviated in latter times, by the attention which the directors have had to apply to these labours the taxes required to procure an exemption from them.

On the first of January 1777, the number of white people at St. Lucia amounted to two thousand three hundred souls, men, women, and children.

There were fifty thousand blacks, or free mulattoes. The cattle consisted of eleven hundred and thirty mules, or horses; two thousand and fifty-three head of horned cattle, and three thousand seven hundred and nineteen sheep, or goats.

There were fifty-three sugar plantations, which occupied fifteen hundred and forty-one pieces of land; five millions forty thousand nine hundred and sixty-two coffee trees; one million nine hundred and forty-five thousand seven hundred and twelve cacao plants; and five hundred and ninety-seven plots of cotton.

These united productions were sold in the island for little less than 3,000,000 of livres [125,000*l.*] Two thirds of them were delivered to the Americans, to the English, and to the Dutch, who were allowed a free trade with the colony. The remainder was carried to Martinico, upon which this island was dependent, and from whence it received some merchandize and some liquors, brought from the mother country.

The character and abilities of the earl of Ennery, the founder of this colony, authorised us to affirm, that when St. Lucia, which is about forty leagues in circumference,

hath attained the degree of cultivation it is capable of, it may employ fifty or sixty thousand slaves, and yield to the value of nine or ten millions [from 375,000*l.* to 416,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] in commodities. This great testimony hath been confirmed since by other directors. By what fatality is it, that this settlement hath acquired so small a degree of improvement, notwithstanding all the encouragements, which it hath received?

THE reason of this is, that from the beginning properties were precipitately given to vagabonds, who had neither the habit of labour nor the means for cultivation: it is because an immense territory was granted to greedy speculators, who were only able to cultivate a few acres: it is because the inland parts were distributed before the borders had been cleared: it is because the ants, which so cruelly infested Martinico, have conveyed the same ravages in the rising sugar plantations of St. Lucia: it is because coffee hath experienced there the same diminution in value as everywhere else: in a word, it is because the administration hath been neither sufficiently regular, nor sufficiently continued, nor sufficiently enlightened. What remedy can be employed against so many errors, against so many calamities?

Obstacles that have prevented the progress of St. Lucia.

It will be necessary to establish a more firm system of government, a more strict police. It will be necessary to deprive of their territory those who have not at least partly fulfilled the engagement they had contracted, of rendering it useful. It will be necessary, by modes of union prudently contrived, to bring together, as much as possible, some of the plantations that are separated by distances, which deprive their owners of the will, of the inclination, and of the facility, of assisting each other. It will be necessary legally to compel all debtors to pay proper attention to their creditors, with whom it had been customary to sport. It will be necessary, by a long series of years, and by authentic acts, to secure to the traders of all nations a free intercourse with this island. Matters ought indeed to be carried still further.

The French of the mother country cannot, and those of the islands will not, cultivate St. Lucia. Many foreigners, on the contrary, have offered to convey their industry and

their capitals there, if the barbarous right of escheat were suppressed; a right which impedes reciprocal commerce of nations; which repels the living man, and spoils the dead one; which disinherits the child of the foreigner; which obliges him to leave his wealth in his own country; and which prohibits him from obtaining elsewhere any acquisition of personal or real estate: a right which a people who have the least idea of good policy will abolish among themselves, and the extinction of which they will carefully abstain from soliciting in other countries. It is to be hoped that the court of Versailles will no longer persist in rejecting the only method of raising an interesting colony from that languid state into which it hath been plunged by calamities which it was impossible to avert, and by the vices of a bad administration.

Measures to be pursued by France for the security of St. Lucia.

WHEN the proper steps have been taken to render St. Lucia flourishing, the French ministry may pursue the system which they seem to have adopted, of defending their colonies by fortresses. To keep possession of this island, it will be sufficient to defend the Carenage harbour.

This harbour, which is the best in the Antilles, unites many advantages. It hath a great deal of water everywhere, with an excellent bottom. Nature hath provided it with three complete careening places, one for the largest ships, and the two others for frigates. Thirty ships of the line might ride safely there, and be sheltered from the most terrible hurricanes. They have never yet been injured by the worms. The winds are always favourable for sailing out, and the largest squadron would be cleared out in less than an hour.

So favourable a situation is capable of defending not only all the national possessions, but also of threatening those of the enemy throughout America. The naval forces of England cannot cover all parts. The smallest squadron sent out from St. Lucia would in a few days invade those colonies which, being least exposed, would think themselves quite secure. The only way to prevent this danger, would be to block up the Carenage; and even then, the purport of so expensive and tiresome a cruise might be defeated by,

a man who should be bold enough to undertake any enterprise that can be effected at sea.

This harbour, which is subject to the inconvenience of exposing every ship that comes within view to be taken, has never appeared worthy the attention of the British nation, though too powerful and too enlightened not to consider, that ships are to protect the roads, and not the roads the ships. With regard to France, this harbour affords the greatest maritime defence, that is to say, a position that will not allow a ship under sail to enter. She must be warped for a considerable space before she can get into it. There is no plying to windward between the two points. The soundings increasing suddenly near the land from twenty-five to a hundred fathom, will not permit the assailants to come to an anchor. Only one ship can come in at a time, and she would be exposed to the fire of three masked batteries in front and on both sides.

A ship that would attack the harbour would be under the necessity of landing at Shoque bay, a shore a league long, which is only parted from the Carenage by the point called Vigie, which forms this bay. If the enemy were once masters of the Vigie, they would sink every ship in the harbour, or at least compel them to bring to, and that without any loss on their side; because this peninsula, though commanded by a citadel built on the other side of harbour, would cover the assailants by its own back. It would only have occasion for mortars, and neither fire a single gun, nor endanger the life of one man.

If the shutting up of the entrance of the harbour against the enemy were sufficient, it would be needless to fortify the Vigie. The enemy might be kept out without this precaution; but the ships of the French must be protected. It is necessary that a small squadron should be able to set the English forces at defiance; compel them to block up the place; take advantage of their absence, or of some error they might fall into; all which cannot be effected without fortifying the top of the peninsula. It must be considered, that by thus multiplying the points of defence, a greater number of men will be wanted; but if there be any ships in the harbour, their sailors and gunners may be employed in defending the Vigie, which they would do with the greater alacrity, as on this would depend the safe-

ty of the squadron. If there be no vessels in the harbour, the Vigie will be abandoned, or ill defended, and that for the following reason.

On the other side of the harbour there is an eminence, called *Morne Fortuné*. The flat on the top offers one of those favourable situations, that are seldom to be met with for erecting a citadel, which would require almost as great a force to attack it as the best fortified place in Europe. This fortification, the plan of which is already laid, and will certainly one day be carried into execution, will have the advantage of defending the Carenage bay on all sides, of commanding all the eminences that surround it, and of making it impossible for the enemy to enter; of securing the town which is to be built on the back of the mountain; in short, of hindering the assailants from penetrating into the island, even if they had actually landed at Shoque bay, and made themselves masters of the Vigie. Further discussions on the means of preserving St. Lucia must be left to the professors of the military art.

It is not, in truth, a motive of vanity that hath engaged us in the discussion of this matter, which is so contrary to our profession, and which implies so many studies to which we are strangers, and so long an experience in those who follow it. But zeal, the desire of doing good, and the spirit of patriotism, direct the thoughts of the man and of the citizen upon every object. His heart grows warm; he reflects; and if he thinks he has not discovered what is right to be done, he must speak, because his silence would be reproachful to himself. "If my ideas be just," saith he to himself, "perhaps government may avail, themselves of them; if they be erroneous, the worst that can happen will be, that I shall excite a smile, and that I shall be called the good man, a name which the venerable abbé of St. Pierre took so much pride in. I would rather run the risk of being ridiculous, than lose the opportunity of being useful." Whether this duty be well fulfilled or not, let us fix the attention of the reader on Martinico.

The French settle at Martinico, upon the ruins of the Caribs.

THIS island hath sixteen leagues in length, and forty-five in circumference, exclusive of the capes, which sometimes extend two or three leagues into

the sea. It is very uneven, and intersected in all parts by a number of hillocks, which are mostly of a conical form. Three mountains rise above these smaller eminences. The highest bears the indelible marks of an ancient volcano. The woods with which it is covered, continually attract the clouds, which occasions noxious damps, and contributes to make it horrid and inaccessible, while the two others are in most parts cultivated. From these mountains, but chiefly from the first, issue the many springs that water the island. These waters, which flow in gentle streams, are changed into torrents on the slightest storm. Their quality partakes of the nature of the soil they pass through; in some places they are excellent, in others so bad, that the inhabitants are obliged to drink the water they have collected in the rainy season.

Denambuc, who had sent to reconnoitre Martinico, sailed from St. Christophers in 1635, to settle his nation there; for he would not have it peopled from Europe. He foresaw that men, tired with the fatigue of a long voyage, would mostly perish soon after their arrival, either from the effects of a new climate, or from the hardships incident to most emigrations. The sole founders of this new colony were a hundred men, who had long lived in this government of St. Christophers. They were brave, active, inured to labour and fatigues; skilful in tilling the ground and erecting habitations; abundantly provided with potatoe plants, and all necessary seeds.

They completed their first settlement without any difficulty. The natives, intimidated by the fire-arms, or seduced by the promises that were made them, gave up to the French the western and southern parts of the island, and retired to the other. This tranquillity was of short duration. The Caribs, when they saw these enterprising strangers daily increasing, were convinced that their ruin was inevitable, unless they could extirpate them; and they therefore called in the savages of the neighbouring islands to their assistance. They fell jointly upon a little fort that had been accidentally erected; but they met with such a warm reception, that they thought proper to retreat, leaving seven or eight hundred of their best warriors dead upon the spot. After this check they disappeared for a long while; and when they returned, they brought with them presents, and ex-

pressed their concern for what had happened. They were received in a friendly manner; and the reconciliation was sealed with some bottles of brandy that were given them to drink.

The labours had been carried on with difficulty till this period. The fear of a surprise obliged the colonists of three different habitations to meet every night in that which was in the centre, and which was always kept in a state of defence. There they slept secure, guarded by their dogs and a centinel. In the day-time no one ventured out without his gun, and a brace of pistols at his girdle. These precautions were needless when the two nations came to be on friendly terms; but the one, whose friendship and favour had been courted, took such undue advantages of her superiority, to extend her usurpations, that she soon rekindled in the others a hatred that had never entirely subsided. The savages, whose manner of life requires a vast extent of land, finding themselves daily more straitened, had recourse to stratagem, to weaken an enemy whom they dared not attack by force. They separated into small bands, waylaid the French, who frequented the woods, waited till the sportsman had fired his piece, and, before he had time to load it again, rushed upon him and destroyed him. Twenty men had been thus destroyed before any one was able to account for their disappearance. As soon as this particular was discovered, the aggressors were pursued and beaten, their carbets burnt, their wives and children massacred, and those few that escaped the carnage, fled from Martinico, and never appeared there again.

First labours of the French in Martinico.

THE French, by this retreat now become sole masters of the island, lived quietly upon those spots which best suited their plantations. They were then divided into two classes. The first consisted of such as had paid their passage to America; and these were called inhabitants. The government distributed lands to them, which became their absolute property upon paying a yearly tribute. They were obliged to keep watch by turns, and to contribute, in proportion to their abilities, towards the necessary expences for the public welfare and safety. These had under their command a multitude of miserable people

brought over from Europe at their expence, whom they called *engages*, or bondsmen. This engagement was a kind of slavery for the term of three years. When that time was expired, the bondsmen, by recovering their liberty, became the equals of those whom they had served.

They all confined themselves at first to the cultivation of tobacco and cotton; to which was soon added that of the arnetto and indigo. That of sugar was not begun till about the year 1650. Benjamin Dacosta, one of those Jews who are beholden for their industry to that very oppression which their nation is now fallen under, after having exercised it upon others, planted some cocoa trees ten years after. His example was not followed till 1684, when the chocolate grew more common in France. Cocoa then became the principal dependence of the colonists, who had not a sufficient fund to undertake sugar plantations. One of those calamities which arise from the seasons, and which sometimes affect men, and sometimes vegetables, destroyed all the cocoa trees in 1727. This spread a general consternation among the inhabitants of Martinico. The coffee tree was then proposed to them, as a plank is held out to mariners after a shipwreck.

The French ministry had received, as a present from the Dutch, two of these trees, which were carefully preserved in the king's botanical garden. Two shoots were taken from these. Mr. Desclieux, who was intrusted to carry them over to Martinico, in 1726, happened to be on-board a ship which wanted water. He shared with his young trees the portion that was allotted him for his own drinking; and by this generous sacrifice saved half of the valuable trust that had been put into his hands. His magnanimity was rewarded. The culture of coffee was attended with the greatest and most rapid success; and this virtuous patriot enjoyed, till the end of 1774, the pleasing satisfaction, the uncommon felicity, of having as it were saved an important colony, and enriched it with a fresh branch of industry.

Independent of this resource, Martinico was possessed of those natural advantages which seemed to promise a speedy and great prosperity. Of all the French settlements, it is the most happily situated with regard to the winds that prevail in those seas. Its harbours possess the inestimable

advantage of affording a certain shelter from the hurricanes which annoy these latitudes. Its situation having made it the seat of government, it has obtained the greatest marks of favour, and enjoyed the ablest and most upright administration of them all. The enemy has constantly respected the valour of its inhabitants, and has seldom attacked it, without having cause to repent. Its domestic peace has never been disturbed, not even in 1717, when, urged by a general discontent, the inhabitants ventured, boldly indeed, but prudently, to send back to France a governor and an intendant, who oppressed the people under their despotism and rapaciousness. The order, tranquillity, and harmony, which they found means to preserve in those times of anarchy, were a proof that they were influenced rather by their aversion from tyranny, than by their impatience of authority; and served in some measure to justify to the mother country, a step, which in itself might be considered as irregular, and contrary to the established principles.

Notwithstanding all these advantages, Martinico, though in greater forwardness than the other French colonies, had made but little progress at the end of the last century. In 1700, it contained but 6,597 white men in all. The savages, mulattoes, and free negroes, men, women, and children, amounted to no more than 507. The number of slaves was but 14,566. All these together made a population of 21,640 persons. The whole of the cattle was 3,668 horses or mules, and 9,217 head of horned cattle. They grew a great quantity of cocoa, tobacco, and cotton, and had nine indigo houses, and one hundred and eighty-three small-sugar plantations.

*Prosperity of
Martinico.*

Cause of it.

ON the cessation of the long and obstinate wars, which had ravaged all the continents, and been carried on upon all the seas of the world, and when France had relinquished her projects of conquests and those principles of administration by which she had been so long misled; Martinico emerged from that feeble state in which all these calamities had kept her, and soon rose to a great degree of prosperity. She became the general mart for all the windward national settlements. It was in her ports that the

neighbouring islands sold their produce, and bought the commodities of the mother country. The French navigators loaded and unloaded their ships nowhere else. Martinico was famous all over Europe. She was the object of speculation, considered under the different views of a planter, an agent to the other colonies, and a trader with Spanish and North America.

As a planter, it employed, in 1736, seventy-two thousand slaves, upon a soil, great part of which was newly cleared, and which constantly yielded very abundant crops.

The connections of Martinico with the other islands intitled her to the profits of commission, and the charges of transport, as she alone was in possession of carriages. This profit might be rated at the tenth of the produce, which was increasing daily. This standing debt, seldom called in, was left them for the improvement of their plantations. It was increased by advances in money, slaves, and other necessary articles. Martinico, thus becoming more and more a creditor to the other islands, kept them in constant dependence, but without injuring them. They all enriched themselves by her assistance, and their profit was beneficial to her.

Her connections with cape Breton, with Canada, and with Louisiana, procured her a market for her ordinary sugars, her inferior coffee, her molasses, and rum, which would not sell in France. They gave her, in exchange, salt fish, dried vegetables, deals, and some flour.

In her clandestine trade on the coasts of Spanish America, consisting wholly of goods manufactured by the nation, she was well paid for the risks which the French merchants did not choose to run. This traffic, less important than the former as to its object, was much more lucrative in its effects. It commonly brought in a profit of fourscore or ninety per cent. upon the value of three or four millions of livres [from 125,000*l.* to 166,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] yearly sent to the Caraccas, or the neighbouring colonies.

So many prosperous transactions had brought immense sums into Martinico. Twelve millions of livres [500,000*l.*] were constantly circulated there with amazing rapidity. This is, perhaps, the only country in the world where the specie has been so considerable, as to make it a matter of

indifference to them whether they dealt in gold or silver, or in commodities.

Her extensive trade annually brought into her ports two hundred ships from France, fourteen or fifteen fitted out by the mother country for the coast of Guinea, thirty from Canada, ten or twelve from the islands of Margarett and Trinidad; beside the English and Dutch ships that come to carry on a smuggling trade. The private navigation from the island to the northern colonies, to the Spanish continent, and to the Windward islands, employed a hundred and thirty vessels, from twenty to seventy tons burthen, manned with six hundred European sailors of all nations, and fifteen hundred slaves long inured to the sea service.

*Manner in which
the trade is carried
on in Martinico.*

At first, the ships that frequented Martinico used to land in those parts where the plantations lay. This practice, seemingly the most natural, was liable to great inconveniences. The north and north easterly winds which blow upon part of the coasts, keep the sea in a constant and violent agitation. Though there are many good roads, they are either at a considerable distance from each other, or from most of the habitations. The sloops, destined to coast along this interval, were frequently forced by the weather to anchor, or to take in but half their loading. These difficulties retarded the loading and unloading of the ship; and the consequence of these delays was, a great loss of men, and an increase of expence to the buyer and seller.

Commerce, which must always reckon among its *greatest* advantages that of procuring a quick return, could not ~~but~~ be impeded by another inconvenience, which was the necessity the trader lay under, even in the best latitudes, of disposing of his cargo in small parcels. If some industrious man undertook to save him that trouble, this enhanced the price of the goods to the colonists. The merchant's profit is to be rated in proportion to the quantity he sells. The more he sells, the more is he able to abate of the profit which another must make who sells less.

A greater inconvenience than either of these was, that some places was overstocked with some sorts of European

goods, while others were in want of them. The owners of the ships were equally at a loss to take in a proper lading. Most places did not afford all sorts of commodities, nor every species of the same commodity. This deficiency obliged them to touch at several places, or to carry away too great or too small a quantity of what was fit for the port where they were to unload.

The ships themselves were exposed to several difficulties. Many of them wanted careening, and most required at least some repair. The proper assistance on these occasions was not to be found in the roads that were but little frequented, where workmen did not choose to settle, for fear of not getting sufficient employment. They were therefore obliged to go and refit in some particular harbours, and then return to take in their lading at the place where they had made their sale. These different expeditions took up at least three or four months.

These and many more inconveniences made it very desirable to some of the inhabitants, and to all the navigators, to establish a magazine, where the colonies and the mother country might send their respective articles of exchange. Nature seemed to point out Fort Royal as a fit place for this purpose. Its harbour was one of the best in all the Windward islands, and so celebrated for its safety, that, when it was opened to the Dutch vessels, they had orders from the republic to shelter there in June, July, and August, from the hurricanes which are so frequent and so violent in those latitudes. The lands of the Lamentin are distant but a league, and are the most fertile and richest of all the colony. The numerous rivers which water this fruitful country, convey loaded canoes to a certain distance from the place where they empty into the sea. The protection of the fortifications secured the peaceable enjoyment of so many advantages; which, however, were balanced by a swampy and unwholesome soil. This capital of Martinico was also the asylum of the men of war; which branch of the navy at that time despised, and even oppressed, the merchantmen. On this account, Fort Royal was an improper place to become the centre of trade, which was therefore turned to St. Peters.

This little town, which, notwithstanding the fires that have reduced it four times to ashes, still contains eighteen

hundred houses, is situated on the western coast of the island, in a bay or inlet which is almost circular. One part of it is built on the strand along the sea-side ; which is called the Anchorage ; and is the place destined for the ships and warehouses. The other part of the town stands upon a low hill : it is called the Fort, from a small fortification that was built there in 1665, to check the seditions of the inhabitants against the tyranny of monopoly ; but it now serves to protect the road from foreign enemies. These two parts of the town are separated by a rivulet, or fordable river.

The anchorage is at the back of a pretty high and perpendicular hill. Shut up, as it were, by this hill, which intercepts the easterly winds, the most constant and most salubrious in these parts ; exposed, without any refreshing breezes, to the scorching beams of the sun, reflected from the hill, from the sea, and the black sand on the beach ; this place is extremely hot, and always unwholesome. Besides, there is no harbour ; and the ships, which cannot winter safely upon this coast, are obliged to take shelter at Fort Royal. But these disadvantages are compensated by the conveniency of the road of St. Peters, for loading and unloading of goods ; and by its situation, which is such, that ships can freely go in and out at all times, and with all winds.

This village was the first that was built, and the first that was cultivated on the island. It hath not been, however, so much on account of its antiquity as of its convenience, that it enjoys the advantage of having become the centre of communication between the colony and the mother country. At first, St. Peters was the storehouse for the commodities of some districts, which lay along such dreary and tempestuous coasts, that no ship could ever get at them ; so that the inhabitants could carry on no trade without removing elsewhere. The agents for these colonists in those early times, were only the masters of small vessels, who having made themselves known, by continually sailing about the island, were enticed, by the prospect of gain, to fix upon a settled place for their residence. Honesty was the only support of this intercourse : most of these agents could not read. None of them kept any books or journals. They had a trunk, in which they kept

a separate bag for each person, whose business they transacted. Into this bag they put the produce of the sales, and took out what money they wanted for the purchases. When the bag was empty, the commission was at an end. This confidence, which must appear fabulous in our days of degeneracy and dishonesty, was yet common at the beginning of this century. There are some persons still living, who have carried on this trade, where the employer had no other security for the fidelity of his agent, but the benefit resulting from it.

These plain men were successively replaced by more enlightened persons from Europe. Some had gone over to the colony, when it was taken out of the hands of the exclusive companies. Their number increased as the commodities multiplied; and they themselves contributed greatly to the extending of the plantations by the loans they advanced to the planters; whose labours had, till then, gone on but slowly for want of such help. This conduct made them the necessary agents for their debtors in the colony, as they were already for their employers at home. Even the colonist, who owed them nothing, was in some measure dependent on them, as he might possibly hereafter stand in need of their assistance. If his crop should fail, or be retarded, a plantation of sugar-canes be set on fire, or a mill blown down; if his buildings should fall, mortality carry off his cattle or his slaves; or if every thing should be destroyed by drought or heavy rains; where could he find the means of supporting himself during these calamities, or of repairing the loss occasioned by them? These means are in twenty different hands. If only one refuses his assistance, the distress must necessarily increase. These considerations induced such as had not yet borrowed money, to trust the agents of St. Peters with their concerns, in order to secure a resource in times of distress.

The few rich inhabitants, whose fortunes seemed to place them above these wants, were in some degree compelled to apply to this factory. The trading captains, finding a port where they might with advantage complete their business, without stirring out of their warehouses, or even of their ships, forsook Fort Royal, Trinity Fort, and all the other places where an arbitrary price was put upon the commodities, and where the payments were slow and

uncertain. By this revolution, the colonists, being confined to their works, which require a constant and daily attendance, could no longer go out to dispose of their produce. They were therefore obliged to intrust it to able men, who, being settled at the only frequented sea-port, were ready to seize the most favourable opportunities for buying and selling; an inestimable advantage this, in a country where trade is continually fluctuating. Guadaloupe and Granada followed this example, induced by the same motives.

The war of 1744 put a stop to this prosperity; not that the fault was in Martinico itself. Its navy, constantly exercised, and accustomed to frequent engagements, which the carrying on of a contraband trade required, was prepared for action. In less than six months, forty privateers, fitted out at St. Peters, spread themselves about the latitudes of the Caribbee islands. They signalized themselves in a manner worthy of the ancient freebooters. They were constantly returning in triumph, and laden with an immense booty. Yet, in the midst of these successes, an entire stop was put to the navigation of the colony, both to the Spanish coast and to Canada, and they were constantly disturbed even on their own coasts. The few ships that came from France, in order to compensate the hazards they were exposed to by the loss of their commodities, sold them at a very advanced price, and bought them at a very low one. By this means the produce decreased in value, the lands were but ill cultivated, the works neglected, and the slaves perishing for want. Every thing was in a declining state, and tending to decay. The peace at last restored the freedom of trade, and with it the hopes of recovering the ancient prosperity of the island. The event did not answer the pains that were taken to attain it.

Decline of Martinico, and the cause of it.

Two years had not yet elapsed since the cessation of hostilities, when the colony lost the contraband trade she carried on with the American Spaniards. This revolution was not owing to the vigilance of the guarda costas. As it is more the interest of the traders to set them at defiance, than theirs to defend themselves; the former are apt to despise men who are ill paid to protect

such rights, or inforce such prohibitions as are oftentimes unjust. The substitution of register ships to the fleets was the cause that confined the attempts of the smugglers within very narrow limits. In the new system, the number of ships was undetermined, and the time of their arrival uncertain, which occasioned a variation in the price of commodities unknown before. From that time the smuggler, who only engaged in this trade from the certainty of a fixed and constant profit, would no longer pursue it, when it did not secure him an equivalent to the risks he ran.

But this loss was not so sensibly felt by the colony, as the hardships brought upon them by the mother country. An unskilful administration clogged the reciprocal and necessary connection between the islands and North America with so many formalities, that in 1755 Martinico sent but four vessels to Canada. The direction of the colony, now committed to the care of avaricious and ignorant clerks, soon lost its importance, sunk into contempt, and was prostituted to venality.

In the meanwhile the trade of France was not yet affected by the decay of Martinico. The French found traders in the road of St. Peters, who purchased their cargoes at a good price, and sent their ships home with expedition, and richly laden; and they never inquired from what particular colony the consumption and produce arose. Even the negroes who were carried there were sold at a high price; but few remained. The greatest part were sent to the Granades, to Guadaloupe, and even to the neutral islands, which, notwithstanding the unlimited freedom they enjoyed, preferred the slaves brought by the French to those the English offered, though apparently on better terms. They were convinced, from long experience, that the chosen negroes, who cost the most, enriched their lands, while the plantations did not flourish in the hands of the negroes bought at a lower price. But these profits of the mother country were foreign and rather hurtful to Martinico.

She had not yet repaired her losses during the peace, nor paid off the debts which a series of calamities had obliged her to contract; when war, the greatest of all evils, broke out afresh. A series of misfortunes for France, after re-

peated defeats and losses, made Martinico fall into the hands of the English. It was restored in July 1763, sixteen months after it had been conquered; but deprived of all the necessary means of prosperity, that had made it of so much importance. For some years past, the contraband trade carried on to the Spanish coasts was almost entirely lost. The cession of Canada and of Louisiana had precluded all hopes of opening again a communication, which had only been interrupted by temporary mistakes. The productions of the Granades, St. Vincent, and Dominica, which were now become British dominions, could no longer be brought into their harbours; and a new regulation of the mother country, which forbade her having any intercourse with Gaudaloupe, left her no hopes from that quarter.

The colony, thus destitute, could depend upon nothing but its cultures; unfortunately, at the period when its inhabitants began to attend to them with advantage, there appeared in the island a species of ant unknown in America, before it had exercised such ravages in Bardadoes, that it was deliberated, whether it would not be proper to abandon a colony formerly so flourishing. It is not known whether this insect was transferred to Martinico from the continent, or from this island. It is however certain, that it occasioned inexpressible ravages in all the sugar plantations in the island where it appeared. This calamity, which had been too ineffectually resisted, had lasted for eleven years, when the colonists assembled on the 9th of March 1775, announced a reward of 666,000 livres [27,750*l.*] for the person who should find a remedy against these destructive scourges. This important secret hath been already discovered and practised by an officer named Desvouse, upon one of the plantations the most infested with ants. This excellent cultivator had obtained plentiful crops by multiplying the labours, the manure, and the weedings, by burning the straw in which this insect concealed itself, by replanting the sugar-canes after every crop, and by disposing them in such a manner as to facilitate the circulation of the air. This example hath at length been followed by the rich colonists; others will imitate it in proportion to their means; and it is to be hoped that in process of time, the recollection only will remain of this great disaster.

This calamity was raging in its greatest force, when the hurricane of 1766, the most furious of those which had ravaged Martinico, destroyed the provisions and the harvests, rooted up the trees, and even overthrew the buildings. The destruction was so general, that scarce a few inhabitants remained able to administer comfort to so many unfortunate people, and to relieve so many miseries.

The high price to which for some time coffee had risen, assisted them in supporting these misfortunes. This production, which had been too much cultivated, fell into disgrace, and the planters preserved only the regret of having devoted their lands to a commodity, the value of which was no more sufficient for their subsistence.

To complete these misfortunes, the mother country suffered the colony to be in want of the persons necessary for the labours of it; for from the year 1764 to 1774 the trade of France did not introduce into Martinico more than three hundred and forty-five slaves, one year with another. The inhabitants were reduced to the necessity of renewing their men from the refuse of the English cargoes clandestinely introduced.

An enlightened minister, whose watchful care would have extended itself to all parts of the empire, would have alleviated the fate of a great settlement so cruelly afflicted, but this was not the case. New offices established on the colony were substituted to those succours it had a right to expect.

In the French settlements in the New World, and undoubtedly in those of other nations likewise, the Africans grew extremely depraved; and this was, because they were certain of impunity. Their masters, seduced by a blind motive of interest, never brought the criminals to justice. In order to put a stop to this great mischief, the black code regulated that the price of every slave who should be condemned to death, after information lodged against him with the magistrate by the proprietor, should be paid for by the colony.

Collections were immediately made for this useful purpose; but part of them was soon employed in expences foreign to their institution. That of Martinico was still more oppressed than the others with these acts of injustice; when in 1771 it was burthened with the expences incurred

by the chamber of agriculture belonging to the colony, and with the salary of a deputy, which its council keeps to no purpose in the mother country.

Oppression was carried still further. The duties which the government collected at Martinico, were originally very trifling, and were paid in provisions, which were changed into metals, when these universal agents of commerce were multiplied in the island. Nevertheless, the impost was moderate till 1763, when it was raised to eight hundred thousand livres [833,333l. 6s. 8d.] Three years after, it became necessary to lower it, but this diminution, extorted by the calamities of the times, was put a stop to in 1762. The tribute was lowered again in 1778, to the sum of 666,000 livres [27,750l.] which is equal to a million [41,666l. 13s. 4d.] in the islands. It is paid by a poll-tax upon the white people and upon the negroes, by a tax of five per cent. on the rent of houses, by a duty of one per cent. on all heavy merchandize which enters the colony, and an equal duty upon all provisions that are exported from it, except coffee, which pays three per cent.

Present State of Martinico. ON the first of January 1778, the population of Martinico consisted of twelve thousand white people of all ages and of both sexes; three thousand free negroes or mulattoes, and upwards of fourscore thousand slaves, though its calculations did not amount to more than seventy-two thousand.

Its cattle consisted of eight thousand two hundred mules or horses; nine thousand seven hundred head of horned cattle, and thirteen thousand one hundred hogs, sheep, or

Its sugar plantations amounted to two hundred and fifty-seven, which occupied ten thousand three hundred and ninety-seven squares of land. It cultivated sixteen millions six hundred two thousand eight hundred and seventy coffee plants; one million four hundred thirty thousand and twenty cacao plants; and one million six hundred forty-eight thousand five hundred and fifty cotton plants.

In 1775, the French navigators loaded at Martinico one hundred and twenty-two vessels, with two hundred and forty-four thousand four hundred and thirty-eight quintals fifty-eight pounds of clayed or raw sugar, which were sold

in the mother country for 9,971,155 livres 3 sols 7 deniers [about 415,465l. 16s.] with ninety-six thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine quintals sixty-eight pounds of coffee, which were sold for 4,577,259 livres 16 sols [190,719l. 3s. 2d.] eleven hundred and forty-seven quintals eight pounds of indigo, which were sold for 975,018 livres [40,625l. 15s.] eight thousand six hundred and fifty-six quintals sixty-three pounds of cacao, which were sold for 605,964 livres 12 sols [25,248l. 10s. 6d.] eleven thousand and twelve quintals of cotton, which were sold for 2,753,100 livres [114,712l. 10s.] nine hundred and nineteen hides, which were sold for 8,271 livres [344l. 12s. 6d.] twenty-nine quintals ten pounds of rope-yarn, which were sold for 29,100 livres [1,212l. 10s.] nineteen hundred sixty-six quintals thirty-five pounds of black cassia, which were sold for 52,980 livres 10 sols [2,207l. 10s.] one hundred and twenty-five quintals of wood, which were sold for 3,125 livres [130l. 4s. 2d.] The total amount of these articles was 18,975,974 livres 1 sol 7 deniers [about 790,665l. 11s. 9d.] but this sum did not entirely belong to the colony; a little more than a quarter of it belonged to St. Lucia and Guadaloupe, which had sent part of their productions to Martinico.

ALL those who from instinct or duty are concerned for the interest of their country, would wish to see the productions multiplied at Martinico. It is well known, indeed, that the centre of the island, full of horrid rocks, is unfit for the culture of sugar, coffee, or cotton; that too much moisture would be hurtful to these productions; and that, should they succeed, the charges of carriage across mountains and precipices would absorb the profits of the crops. But in this large space meadows would turn to very good account. The soil is excellent for pasture, and only wants the attention of government to furnish the inhabitants with the necessary increase of cattle both for labour and food. There are other spots on the island where the soil is ungrateful: craggy territories, which have been levelled by the torrents and the rains; swampy grounds, which it would be difficult, and perhaps impossible, to dry up; and stony lands, which cannot be ferti-

Has Martinico any prospect of improving?

lized by any kind of labour. The observers, however, who are the most acquainted with the colony, unanimously agree, that these cultures are capable of being increased nearly by one third, and that even this improvement might be brought about by a better and more steady method of cultivation, without any further clearing of lands. But in order to attain to this improvement, a greater number of slaves would be required. It is a considerable thing that the inhabitants have been able to preserve, till our time, their works in the same state as they had received them from their ancestors. We do not think that it will be in their power to increase them.

The proprietors of the lands at Martinico may be divided into four classes. The first are possessed of a hundred large sugar plantations, in which twelve thousand negroes are employed. The second have one hundred and fifty, worked by nine thousand blacks. The third class possess thirty-six, with two thousand blacks. The fourth, devoted to the culture of coffee, cotton, cocoa, and cassava, may employ twelve thousand negroes. The remaining slaves of both sexes are engaged in domestic services, in fishing, or in navigation; they are children or infirm persons.

The first class consists entirely of rich people. Their culture is carried to the highest degree of perfection, and they are able to preserve it in the flourishing state to which they have brought it. Even the expences they must be at for replacing deficiencies, are not so great as those of the less wealthy planter, as the slaves born upon these plantations supply the place of those destroyed by time and labour.

The second class, which is that of planters in easy circumstances, have but half the hands that would be necessary to acquire a fortune equal to that of the opulent proprietors. If they were even able to buy the number of slaves they want, they would be deterred from it by fatal experience. Nothing can be more imprudent than the custom of putting a great number of fresh negroes upon a plantation. The sickness those miserable wretches are liable to, from a change of climate and diet; the trouble of inuring them to a kind of labour to which they are not accustomed, and which they dislike, cannot but disgust a planter, from the constant and laborious attention he must pay to

this training up of men for the cultivation of land. The most active proprietor is he, who is able to increase his works by one sixth of the number of slaves every year. Thus the second class might acquire fifteen hundred blacks yearly, if the nett produce of their lands would admit of it. But they must not expect to meet with credit. The merchants in France do not seem disposed to trust them; and those who circulated their stock in the colony, no sooner found that they could not make use of it without running considerable risks, than they removed it to Europe, or to St. Domingo.

The third class, which are but little removed from indigence, cannot change their situation by any means which the natural course of trade can supply. It is a matter of difficulty for them to be able to subsist. The indulgence of government can alone put them into such a flourishing condition as to render them useful to the state, by lending them, without interest, the sums they may want, to raise their plantations. This class might employ a greater number of fresh negroes than we have allotted to the second, without the same inconveniencies; because each planter, having fewer slaves to look after, will be able to pay a greater attention to those he may purchase.

The fourth class, who are employed in cultures of less importance than that of sugar, do not stand in need of such powerful helps, to recover that ease and plenty from which they are fallen by war, hurricanes, and other misfortunes. Could these two last classes but make an acquisition of fifteen hundred slaves every year, it would be sufficient to raise them to that degree of prosperity to which their industry naturally intitles them.

Thus Martinico might hope to revive her declining plantations, and to recover the first splendour to which her diligence had raised her, if she could get a yearly accession of three thousand negroes. But it is well known that she is not in a condition to pay for these recruits. She owes the mother country, for balance of trade, about a million [41,666l, 13s. 4d.] A series of misfortunes has obliged her to borrow four millions [166,666l, 13s. 4d.] of the merchants settled in the town of St. Peter. The engagements she has entered into on account of divided inheritances, and those she has contracted for the purchase of, a

number of plantations, have made her insolvent. This desperate state will neither allow her the means of soon recovering her former situation, nor the ambition of pursuing that road to fortune which once lay open to her.

Whether Marti- ADD to this, that she stands exposed
nico can be con- to invasion. But though there are a
quered? number of places where the enemy may
land, yet they will never make the attempt. It would indeed be fruitless, because of the impossibility of bringing up the artillery and ammunition, across such a rugged country, to Fort Royal, which defends the whole colony. It is in this latitude only that the enemy would fail, in order to make such an attempt.

In the front of this strong and principal place of defence is a famous harbour, situated on the side of a broad bay, that cannot be entered without many tackings, which must decide the fate of any ship that is forced to avoid an engagement. If she happens to be unrigged, or is a bad sailer, or meets with some accident from the variations of the squalls of wind, the currents, or whirlpools, she will fall into the hands of an assailant that is a better sailer. The garrison of the fortress itself may become a useless and inglorious spectator of the defeat of a whole squadron, as it has been often of the taking of merchant ships.

The inside of the harbour is much injured, on account of the hulks of several ships that have been sunk there, to keep out the English in the last war. These vessels have been taken up again; but it will still require a considerable expence to remove the heaps of sand which had gathered about them, and to put the harbour in the same state it was before. This work will not admit of any delay; for the port, though not very spacious, is the only one where ships of all rates can winter; the only one where they can be supplied with masts, sails, cables, and excellent water, which is brought there from the distance of a league by a very well contrived canal, and which may be easily procured.

An enemy will always land near to this harbour, and there is no possibility of preventing them, whatever precaution be taken. The war could only be carried on against them in the field; it could not be continued for any time,

and the people would soon be reduced to shut themselves up in their fortifications.

They formerly had no other fortification than Fort Royal, where immense sums had been buried through want of skill under a ridge of mountains. All the knowledge of the ablest engineers has never been sufficient to give any degree of strength or solidity to works occasionally erected by the most unskilful hands, and without any sort of plan. They have been obliged to content themselves with adding a covered way, a rampart, and flanks, to such parts of the place as would admit of them. But the work of the most consequence has been to cut into the rock, which easily gives way; and to dig subterraneous rooms, which are airy, wholesome, and fit to secure warlike stores and provisions; as also to shelter the sick, and to defend the soldiers, and such of the inhabitants whose attachment to their country would inspire them with courage to defend the colony. It has been thought, that men who were sure of finding a safe retreat in these caverns, after having exposed their lives on the ramparts, would soon forget their fatigues, and face the enemy with fresh vigour. This idea was fortunate and sensible, and must have been suggested, if not by a patriotic government, at least by some sensible and humane minister.

But the bravery this must inspire could not be sufficient to preserve a place, which is commanded on all sides. It was therefore thought advisable to fix upon some more advantageous situation; and the point called *Morne Garnier* was chosen for this purpose, which is higher by thirty-five or forty feet than the highest tops of Patate, Tortonson, and Cartouch, all which overlook Fort Royal.

Upon this eminence a citadel has been raised, consisting of four bastions. The bastions in front, the covered way, the reservoirs for water, the powder magazines; all these means of defence are ready. The cazernes, and other necessary buildings, will soon complete the work. If even the redoubts and the batteries, intend to force the enemy to make their descent at a greater distance than Casco bay, where they landed at the last invasion, should not be attended with the effect that is expected from them; yet still the colony would be able to resist about three months. Fifteen hundred men will defend the *Morne Garnier* for

thirty or six-and-thirty days against an army of fifteen thousand ; and twelve hundred men will sustain themselves for twenty or five-and-twenty days in Fort Royal, which cannot be attacked till *Garnier* has been taken. This is all that can be expected from an expence of ten millions of livres [416,666l. 13s. 4d.]

Those who are of opinion that the navy alone ought to protect the colonies, think that so considerable an expence hath been misapplied. As it was not possible, in their opinion, to erect fortifications and to build ships at the same time, the preference ought to have been given to the latter, as being indispensably necessary ; especially if the impetuosity in the character of the French disposes them to attack rather than to defend, they ought sooner to destroy than erect fortresses ; or none but ships should be built, those moveable ramparts which carry war with them, instead of waiting for it. Any power that aims at trade, and the establishment of colonies, must have ships, which bring in men and wealth, and increase population and circulation ; whereas bastions and soldiers are only fit to consume men and provisions. All that the court of Versailles can expect from the expence they have incurred at Martinico, is, that if the island should be attacked by the only enemy it has to fear, there will be time enough to relieve it. The English proceed slowly in a siege ; they always go on by rule, and nothing diverts them from completing any works that concern the safety of the assailants ; for they esteem the life of a soldier of more consequence than the loss of time. This maxim, so sensible in itself, is, perhaps, misapplied in the destructive climate of America ; but it is the maxim of a people, whose soldiers are engaged in the service of the state, not mercenaries paid by the prince. But whatever be the future fate of Martinico, it is now time to inquire into the present state of Guadalupe.

The French invade Guadalupe. THIS island, which is of an irregular form, may be about eighty leagues in circumference. It is divided into two parts by a small arm of the sea, which is not above two leagues long, and from fifteen to forty toises broad. This

canal, known by the name of the Salt river, is navigable, but will only carry Indian boats.

That part of the island which gives its name to the whole colony, is, towards the centre, full of craggy rocks, and so cold, that nothing will grow there but fern, and some useless shrubs covered with moss. On the top of these rocks, a mountain called *La Souphriere*, or the Brimstone mountain, rises to an immense height into the middle region of the air. It exhales, through various openings, a thick black smoke, intermixed with sparks that are visible by night. From all these hills flow numberless springs, which fertilize the plains below, and moderate the burning heat of the climate by a refreshing stream, so celebrated, that the galleons, which formerly used to touch at the Windward islands, had orders to renew their provision with this pure and salubrious water. Such is that part of the island properly called Guadaloupe. That which is commonly called Grande Terre, has not been so much favoured by nature. The soil is not so fertile, or the climate so wholesome or so pleasant. It is, indeed, less rugged; but it wants springs and rivers. There are even no springs to be found there. Aqueducts, which would not be very expensive, would undoubtedly, in process of time, enable it to enjoy this advantage in common with the other part of the colony.

No European nation had yet taken possession of this island, when five hundred and fifty Frenchmen, led on by two gentlemen named Loline and Dupleffis, arrived there from Dieppe on the 28th of June 1635. They had been very imprudent in their preparations. Their provisions were so ill chosen, that they were spoiled in the passage; and they had shipped so few, that they were exhausted in two months. They were supplied with none from the mother country. St. Christophers, whether from scarcity or design, refused to spare them any; and the first attempts in husbandry they made in the country, could not yet afford any thing. No resource was left for the colony but from the savages; but the superfluities of a people who cultivate but little, and therefore had never laid up any stores, could not be very considerable. The new comers, not content with what the savages might freely and voluntarily bring,

came to a resolution to plunder them; and hostilities commenced on the 16th of January 1636.

The Caribs, not thinking themselves in a condition openly to resist an enemy who had so much the advantage from the superiority of their arms, destroyed their own provisions and plantations, and retired to Grande Terre, or to the neighbouring islands. From thence the most desperate came over to the island from which they had been driven, and concealed themselves in the thickest parts of the forests. In the day time they shot with their poisoned arrows, or knocked down with their clubs, all the French who were scattered about for hunting or fishing. In the night, they burned the dwellings, and destroyed the plantations, of their unjust spoilers.

A dreadful famine was the consequence of this kind of war. The colonists were reduced to graze in the fields, to eat their own excrements, and to dig up dead bodies for their subsistence. Many who had been slaves at Algiers, held in abhorrence the hands that had broken their fetters; and all of them cursed their existence. It was in this manner that they atoned for the crime of their invasion, till the government of Aubert brought about a peace with the savages at the end of the year 1640. When we consider the injustice of the hostilities which the Europeans have committed all over America, we are almost tempted to rejoice at their misfortunes, and at all the judgments that pursue those inhuman oppressors. We are ready, from motives of humanity, to renounce the ties that bind us to the inhabitants of our own hemisphere, to change our connections, and to contract beyond the seas, with the savage Indians, an alliance which unites all mankind, that of misfortune and compassion.

Gaudaloupe flourishes after being conquered by England.

THE remembrance, however, of hardship, endured in an invaded island, proved a powerful incitement to the cultivation of all articles of immediate necessity; which afterwards induced an attention to those of luxury consumed in the mother country. The few inhabitants who had escaped the calamities they had drawn upon themselves, were soon joined by some discontented colonists from St. Christophers, by Europeans fond

of novelty, by sailors tired of navigation, and by some sea-captains, who prudently chose to commit to the care of a grateful soil the treasures they had saved from the dangers of the sea. But still the prosperity of Guadaloupe was stopped, or impeded, by obstacles arising from its situation.

The facility with which the pirates from the neighbouring islands could carry off their cattle, their slaves, their very crops, frequently brought them into a very desperate situation. Intestine broils, arising from jealousies of authority, often disturbed the quiet of the planters. The adventurers who went over to the Windward islands, disdaining a land that was fitter for agriculture than for naval expeditions, were easily attracted to Martinico, by the convenient roads it abounds with. The protection of those intrepid pirates, brought to that island all the traders who flattered themselves that they might buy up the spoils of the enemy at a low price, and all the planters who thought they might safely give themselves up to peaceful labours. This quick population could not fail of introducing the civil and military government of the Caribbee islands into Martinico. From that time, the French ministry attended more seriously to this than to the other colonies, which were not so immediately under their direction; and, hearing chiefly of this island, they turned all their encouragements into that channel.

It was in consequence of this preference, that in 1700 the number of inhabitants in Guadaloupe amounted only to 3,825 white people; 325 savages, free negroes, or mulattoes; and 6,725 slaves, many of whom were Caribs. Her cultures were reduced to 60 small plantations of sugar, 66 of indigo, a little cocoa, and a considerable quantity of cotton. The cattle amounted to 1,620 horses and mules, and 3,699 head of horned cattle. This was the fruit of sixty years labour.

The colony did not make any rapid progress till after the peace of Utrecht. Its population consisted of 9,643 white men; 41,140 slaves; and its cattle and provisions were proportioned to it, when, in the month of April 1759, it was conquered by the arms of Great Britain.

France lamented this loss; but the colony had reason to comfort themselves for this disgrace. During a siege of

three months they had seen their plantations destroyed, the buildings that served to carry on their works burnt down, and some of their slaves carried off. Had the enemy been forced to retreat after all these devastations, the island was ruined. Deprived of all assistance from the mother country, which was not able to send her any succours, and expecting nothing from the Dutch, who on account of their neutrality came into her roads, because she had nothing to offer them in exchange, she could never have subsisted till the ensuing harvest.

The conquerors delivered the colonists from these apprehensions. The English, indeed, are no merchants in their colonies. The proprietors of lands, who mostly reside in Europe, send their representatives whatever they want, and draw the whole produce of the estate by the return of their ship. An agent settled in some sea-port of Great Britain, is intrusted with the furnishing of the plantation, and with receiving the produce. This was impracticable at Guadaloupe; and the conquerors in this respect were obliged to adopt the custom of the conquered. The English, informed of the advantage the French made of their trade with the colonies, hastened, in imitation of them, to send their ships to the conquered island; and so multiplied their expeditions, that they overstocked the market, and sank the price of all European commodities. The colonist bought them at a very low price, and, in consequence of this plenty, obtained long delays for the payment.

To this credit, which was necessary, was soon added another arising from speculation, which enabled the colony to fulfil its engagements.

The victorious nation sent there eighteen thousand seven hundred and twenty-one slaves, in the expectation of reaping in time great advantages from their labour. But their ambition was frustrated, and the colony was restored to its former possessors in July 1763.

Various systems adopted by the ministry of France, in the government of Guadaloupe.

THE flourishing state to which Guadaloupe had been raised by the English, was remarked by all the world, when they restored it. It acquired that degree of consideration, which opulence always inspires at present. The mother

country beheld it with a kind of respect. Till that time it had been subordinate to Martinico, as were all the French windward islands. The island was released from these shackles, which it considered as a disgrace, by giving it an independent administration. This arrangement lasted till 1768, at which period it was again subjected to the former yoke, from which it was released in 1772, and placed under it again six months after. In 1775, a governor of its own was again granted to it; and, it is to be hoped, that after so many variations, the court of Versailles will no more depart from this arrangement, the only one which is conformable to the principles of an enlightened policy. Should administration ever swerve from this fortunate plan, the governors and the intendants would again bestow their care, their credit, and their regard, upon the metropolitan island immediately under their inspection, while the dependent island would be abandoned to subalterns, without influence or without consideration, and consequently without the power or the will of doing any thing useful.

The military men, who have been of opinion that the two colonies should be united under one governor, have been led into it from considering the advantages that would arise from collecting the forces of both islands, for their mutual defence. But they have not reflected, that at an equal distance between Martinico and Guadaloupe, there is Dominica, an English settlement, which cannot be avoided, and which overlooks equally the double canal that divides it from the French possessions. Should the French naval forces be inferior to the English, the communication would be impracticable, because the respective succours would infallibly be intercepted; if, on the contrary, they should be superior, the communication would become useless, because no invasion could be apprehended. In either of these cases, the system proposed is chimerical.

It would be very different, if it were necessary to carry on offensive measures. The union of the powers belonging to each of these islands might become useful, and even necessary, under such circumstances. In that case, the command of the whole would be intrusted to one of the governors, and this command would cease at the conclusion of the projected enterprise.

But is it proper to leave a free trade between the territorial productions of one colony and those of the other? Till the conquest of Guadaloupe by the English, the immediate connections of that island with the ports of France had been limited to six or seven vessels annually. Its provisions, from motives more or less maturely considered, were mostly sent to Martinico. When, at the period of the restitution, the administration of the two colonies was separated, their trade became likewise distinct. The communications have since been opened again, and are still permitted at this present time.

This arrangement is censured by some people in France. It is necessary, say they with acrimony, that the colonies should fulfil their destination, which is, to consume a great quantity of merchandize from the mother country, and to send back a great abundance of productions. And yet, notwithstanding her abilities to fulfil this double obligation, Guadaloupe will neither do the one nor the other, as long as she shall be allowed to carry her commodities to Martinico. This intercourse will always be the cause or the occasion of an immense trade in foreign markets, and at Dominica in particular. This fraudulent trade can only be stopped, and the habit of smuggling eradicated, by prohibiting this communication.

These arguments, which are founded upon motives of private interest, ought not to prevent the confirmation of the connections which Guadaloupe and Martinico have formed with each other. Liberty is the wish of all mankind; and every proprietor hath a natural right to sell the productions of his soil to whom he chooses, and to as much advantage as he can. This fundamental principle of all well regulated societies hath been set aside in favour of the mother country; and it was perhaps necessary in the present state of affairs. But to be desirous of extending farther the prohibitions to which the colonists are subjected; to wish to deprive them of the conveniences and advantages which they may derive from a lasting or a temporary communication with their own fellow citizens, is an act of tyranny which the merchants of France will one day be ashamed of having solicited, and which will never be granted but by an ignorant, corrupt, or weak, minister. If, as it is pretended, the intercourse permitted at present between

the two islands, should give part of their commodities to artful and rapacious rivals, government may find some fair means of introducing into the kingdom the territorial riches of Guadaloupe, and of the small islands which are under its dependence.

DESEADA, at the distance of four or five leagues from Guadaloupe, is one of these islands. Its territory is exceedingly barren, and is ten leagues in circumference. It reckons but few inhabitants, who are all employed in the culture of a few coffee and cotton trees. It is not known at what precise time this settlement was begun, but it is a modern one. *Islands dependent upon Guadaloupe.*

The Saints, three leagues distant from Guadaloupe, are two very small islands, which, with another yet smaller, form a triangle, and have a tolerable harbour. Thirty Frenchmen were sent thither in 1648, but were soon driven away by an excessive drought, which dried up their only spring, before they had time to make any reservoirs. A second attempt was made in 1652, and lasting plantations were established, which now yield fifty thousand weight of coffee, and one hundred thousand of cotton.

At the distance of six leagues from Guadaloupe is Mari-galante, which hath fifteen leagues in circumference. The numerous savages by whom it was inhabited, were driven from it in 1648, by the French, who were obliged to sustain and repel several warm attacks, in order to maintain themselves in their usurpation. It hath an excellent soil, upon which a population hath successively been formed, of seven or eight hundred white people, and of six or seven thousand negroes, most of whom are employed in the culture of sugar.

St. Martin and St. Bartholomew are likewise dependent upon Guadaloupe, though at the distance of forty-five or fifty leagues from it. The former of these islands hath been spoken of in the history of the Dutch settlements. It remains to say something of the latter.

It is said to be eleven leagues in circumference. Its mountains are nothing but rocks, and its valleys nothing but sands, which are never watered by springs or by rivers, and much too seldom by the waters of the sky. It is even

deprived of a good harbour, although all geographers have bestowed this advantage upon it. In 1646, fifty Frenchmen were sent there from St. Christophers; they were massacred by the Caribs in 1656, and were replaced only three years after. The barrenness of the soil obliged them to have recourse to the Guyacum wood, which covered their new country, and of which they made some small works, that were in great request. This resource was soon exhausted, and it was succeeded by the care of a few cattle, which supplied the neighbouring islands. Soon after this, the culture of cotton was introduced; and the crop of this amounts to fifty or sixty thousand weight, when not checked by obstinate droughts, which are very frequent. Till these present times, the labours have all been carried on by white people; and it is still the only one of the European colonies established in the New World, where free men do not disdain to partake of the labours of agriculture with their slaves. The numbers of the latter do not exceed four hundred and twenty-seven, nor those of the former three hundred and forty-five. The island could not, without difficulty, maintain a greater number, even in the most prosperous times.

The wretchedness of the inhabitants is so well known, that the enemy's privateers, which frequently put in there, have always paid punctually for what few refreshments they could spare them, though the miserable inhabitants were too weak to compel them. There is then some humanity left even in the breast of enemies and pirates; man is not naturally cruel; and only becomes so from fear or interest. The armed pirate, who plunders a vessel richly laden, is not destitute of equity, nor even of compassion for a set of poor defenceless islanders.

*Present state of
Guadaloupe, and
of the small islands
under its depen-
dence.*

ON the first of January 1777, the population of Guadaloupe, and of the islands more or less fertile, under its dependence, amounted to twelve thousand seven hundred white persons of all ages and of both sexes, thirteen hundred and fifty free negroes, or mulattoes, and a hundred thousand slaves; although, in the account of the colony,

there were only fourscore and four thousand one hundred mentioned.

Their cattle consisted of nine thousand two hundred and twenty horses or mules, fifteen thousand seven hundred and forty head of horned cattle, and twenty-five thousand four hundred sheep, hogs, or goats.

Their cultures consisted only of four hundred and forty-nine thousand six hundred and twenty-two cacao trees; eleven million nine hundred seventy-four thousand and forty-six cotton plants; eighteen million seven hundred and ninety-nine thousand six hundred and fourscore coffee trees; and three hundred and eighty-eight sugar plantations; which occupied twenty-six thousand and eighty-eight squares of land.

Their government, taxes, and imposts, were the same as at Martinico.

If these frequent calculations be disgusting to the idle reader, it is hoped that they will not be so disagreeable to political calculators; who, discovering, in the population and in the productions of the lands, the exact proportion of the strength of the state, will be the better enabled to compare the natural resources of all nations.

It is only by a well regulated register of such a nature, that we can judge, with some degree of precision, of the present state of the maritime and commercial powers that have settlements in the New World. The merit of the work, in this point, consists in its accuracy; and some allowances ought, perhaps, to be made to the author, for the want of embellishments, in favour of the useful information which is substituted to them. There are eloquent descriptions, and ingenious representations enough of distant countries, which serve to amuse and to deceive the multitude. It is time to appreciate the truth, which results from the history of them, and to be informed, not so much of what they have been, as of what they are at present: for the history of what is passed, especially from the manner in which it is written, is almost as much applicable to future ages, as to the present. Let me be allowed, therefore, once again to declare, that no man should be surprised at the numerous repetitions of the quantity of negroes, of animals, of lands, and of productions; and at details, in a word, which, however dry and unentertaining they may be

to the mind, are nevertheless the natural foundations of society.

Guadaloupe must obtain from its cultures, a very considerable mass of productions, and more considerable even than Martinico. It hath a greater number of slaves; it employs less of them in its navigation and in its commerce; it hath placed a number of them upon a soil which is inferior to that of its rival, but great part of which being newly manured, yields more abundant crops than the grounds which are fatigued by a long continuance of tillage. Accordingly, it is evident, that such of its plantations as are not devoured by ants, yield an income much superior to that which is obtained at Martinico. Nevertheless, eighty-one vessels of the mother country did not carry away, in 1775, from this island, more than one hundred and eighty-eight thousand three hundred and eighty-six quintals six pounds of raw or clayed sugar, which were sold in Europe for 7,137,930 livres 16 sols [297,413l. 15s. 8d.]; sixty-three thousand twenty-nine quintals and two pounds of coffee, which were sold for 2,993,860 livres 19 sols [124,744l. 4s. 1½d.]; fourteen hundred thirty-eight quintals and twenty-seven pounds of indigo, which were sold for 1,222,529 livres 10 sols [50,938l. 14s. 7d.]; one thousand twenty-three quintals fifty-nine pounds of cacao, which were sold for 71,651 livres 6 sols [2,985l. 9s. 5d.]; five thousand one hundred and ninety-three quintals seventy-three pounds of cotton, which were sold for 1,298,437 livres 10 sols [54,101l. 11s. 3d.]; seven hundred and twenty-seven hides, which were sold for 6,973 livres [290l. 10s. 10d.]; sixteen quintals and fifty-six pounds of rope yarn, which were sold for 16,560 livres [690l.]; twelve quintals and sixty-two pounds of black cassia, which were sold for 336 livres 15 sols 10 deniers [about 14l. 8d.]; one hundred and twenty-five quintals of wood, which were sold for 3,125 livres [130l. 4s. 2d.] These sums, collectively, amounted to no more than 12,751,404 livres 16 sols 10 deniers [about 531,291l. 14s. ½d.]

Some of the productions of the colony were sent to Martinico. Its molasses, and some other commodities, were bartered with the Americans, for wood, cattle, flour, and salt fish: its cottons were sent to Dominico, from whence it received slaves; and its sugars to St. Eustatius, which

paid for them in specie, or with bills of exchange, and with merchandize from the East-Indies.

The vigilance of its last directors hath put some stop to these smuggling connections, and the French vessels intended for the exportation of these commodities, have immediately been multiplied. Many of them have been induced by habit to go to Guadaloupe, properly so called, and to St. Charles of the Basse Terre, where all the cargoes were formerly taken in, although it be but a foreign harbour, the access of which is difficult, and in which it is dangerous to remain: but the greatest number of them go to Pitre Point.

This is a deep and tolerably safe harbour, situated at one of the extremities of Grande Terre: it was discovered by the English at the time when they were in possession of the colony; and they were employed in rendering it healthy, when they were deprived of this acquisition by the peace. The court of Versailles pursued this idea of an enlightened conqueror, and, without delay, had the plan of a town traced, which hath rapidly increased. Nature, the winds, the bearing of the coasts, all seem to concur in concentrating in this staple almost the whole trade of so beautiful a possession. St. Charles can preserve no more trade than it can be supplied with from the fine sugars of the Three rivers collected, and from the coffees which are gathered in the districts of the Bailiff, of Deshayes, of Buillante, and of Pointe Noire. This town will, however, continue to be the seat of government, since the forces of the colony, and the fortifications, are there.

If some observers are to be believed, the colony must expect to decline. That part of it which is called Guadaloupe, and hath been cultivated for a long time, is not susceptible, say they, of much improvement. On the other hand, they affirm, that Grande Terre will not support itself in the flourishing state to which a fortunate hazard hath brought it. That vast space, which was almost entirely covered with briars seventeen or eighteen years ago, and which furnishes at present three fifths of the territorial riches, hath not a good soil. Its sugars are of a very inferior quality; it is destitute of forests, of dews, and of rivers, and is exposed to frequent droughts, which destroy its cattle and its productions: calamities which cannot but be increased by time.

We are very far from adopting these anxieties; and our readers may judge of the reasons we have for our security. The calamities of an unfortunate war had almost annihilated Guadaloupe. But scarce had it submitted to a foreign yoke, in 1759, than its planters hastened to restore the ruins of their manufactures, in order to profit by the high price which the conquerors put upon their productions. The three years subsequent to its restitution were employed in the restoration of the buildings, that had been constructed with precipitation. In the years 1767 and 1768, the roads of the colony were all mended, and an easy communication was opened between Guadaloupe and Grande Terre, by means of two causeways of three thousand toises each, which it was necessary to raise in the morasses. Before and after this period, considerable fortifications, and more than one hundred batteries, were erected upon the coasts. These labours have deprived the lands, for a long while, of part of the hands destined to fertilize them. At present, that the slaves are all restored to their manufactures, is it not fortunately a necessary consequence, that the commodities should increase.

The colony hath still other reasons to expect a rapid advancement. It hath some territories which have not yet been manured; and those which are already cultivated are capable of improvement. Its debts are not considerable. With fewer wants than the settlements have, where opulence hath for a long time multiplied propensities and desires, it can bestow more upon the improvement of its cultures. The English islands will continue to furnish it with slaves, if the French navigators still limit themselves to convey to it annually no more than five or six hundred, as they have hitherto done. All these circumstances united, suggest the idea that Guadaloupe will soon rise of itself to the height of its prosperity, without the assistance, and notwithstanding the shackles, of government.

Measures taken by France to preserve Guadaloupe from invasion.

BUT can France be assured of enjoying a long and quiet possession of this island? If the enemy that might attack the colony, chose only to plunder the Grande Terre, and to carry off the slaves and cattle from thence, it would be impossible to

prevent this, or even to retaliate, unless an army were opposed to them. Fort Lewis, which defends this part of the settlement, is but a wretched star-fort, incapable of much resistance. All that could possibly be expected, would be to prevent the devastation from extending any further. The nature of the country presents several situations, some more favourable than others, by which the progress of an assailant may be securely stopped, whatever his courage or his forces may be. He would, therefore, be forced to re-embark and proceed to the attack of what is properly called Guadaloupe.

The landing of the enemy could be effected nowhere but at the bay of the Three rivers, and at that of the Bailiff; or rather these two places would be most favourable to the success of his enterprise; because they would bring him nearer than any other to Fort St. Charles of the Basse Terre, where he would have less difficulties to encounter.

Let the enemy choose whichever of these landings they prefer, they will find nothing more than a spot covered with trees, intersected with rivers, hollow ways, narrow passes, and steep ascents, which they must march over exposed to the French fire. When, by the superiority of their forces, they have surmounted these difficulties, they will be stopped by the eminence of the great camp. This is a platform surrounded by nature with the river Galleon, and with dreadful ravines, to which art hath added parapets, barbettes, flanks, and embrasures, to direct the artillery in the most advantageous manner. This intrenchment, though formidable, must be forced. It is not to be imagined that an intelligent general would ever leave such a post as this behind him: his convoys would be too much exposed, and he would not get up what would be necessary for carrying on the siege of Fort St. Charles without much difficulty.

If those who were first employed in fortifying Guadaloupe, had understood the art of war, or even been only engineers, they would not have failed choosing the position between the river of the Great-bay and that of Galleon for erecting their fortifications. The place then would have had towards the sea side a front, that would have inclosed a harbour capable of containing forty sail of ships, which would have annoyed the enemy's fleet, without being themselves in the

least exposed. The fronts towards the river Galleon and that of the Great bay would have been inaccessible, being placed upon the summit of two very steep ascents. The fourth front would have been the only place open to an attack; and it would have been an easy matter to strengthen that as much as might have been thought proper.

By choosing the present position of Fort St. Charles, the works, which were constructed there, ought at least to have flanked each other from the sea, and from the heights. But the principles of fortification were so much neglected, that the fire was pointed entirely in a wrong direction, that the internal works were in all parts open to the view, and that the revetments might be battered from the bottom.

Such was the condition of Fort St. Charles, when, in 1764, it was thought proper to put it in a state of defence. Perhaps, it might have been best to destroy it totally, and to place the new fortifications on the position just pointed out. It was however thought necessary to cover the bad fort, constructed by unskilful persons, with out-works; adding two bastions towards the sea-side; a good covered-way, which goes all round, together with a glacis, partly cut and partly in a gentle slope; two large places of arms with re-entering angles, having each a good redoubt, and behind these, good tenailles, with caponieres and posterns of communication with the body of the place; two redoubts, one on the prolongation of the capital of one of the two places of arms, and the other at the extremity of an excellent intrenchment made along the river Galleon, the platform of which is defended by the cannon from another intrenchment made on the top of the bank of the other side of the same river; large and deep ditches, a reservoir for water, and a powder magazine, bomb proof; in a word, a sufficient quantity of works under ground to lodge a third part of the garrison. All these out-works, well contrived, being added to the fort, will enable an active and experienced commander to hold out a siege of two months, and perhaps more. But whatever may be the resistance that Guadaloupe can oppose to the attacks of the enemy, it is time to pass on to St. Domingo.

Book XIII. IN THE EAST AND WEST INDIES.

THIS island is one hundred and sixty leagues in length; its main breadth is about thirty; and its circumference three hundred and fifty, or six hundred in coasting round the several bays. It is parted lengthways, from east to west, by a ridge of mountains, from which gold was extracted, before the continent of America had disclosed mines infinitely richer.

*Short description
of the island of St.
Domingo.*

The navigator who draws near to, or who approaches, the Spanish part of the island, perceives nothing but an irregular mass of lands, heaped one upon another, covered with trees, and divided towards the seaside by bays or promontories: but he is indemnified for this prospect, which is none of the most agreeable, by the perfume of the flowers of acacia, and of the orange and lemon trees, which are conveyed to him every morning and evening, from the midst of the woods, by the land breezes.

The French part of the coast, although cultivated, doth not exhibit a much more smiling aspect. There is a sameness in all the horizon; the same accidents of nature, the same cultures, the same colours, and the same edifices, present themselves on all sides. The eye, fatigued, cannot fix itself on any spot, without meeting with the same object, and without seeing what it had seen before. There is only the northern part, which, being full of rich plantations, from the seaside to the tops of the hills, exhibits a prospect worthy of some attention. This is the only landscape in the island; but it cannot be compared to those in Europe, where nature and art abound much more in interesting beauties.

The heats are always considerable in the plains. Although the temperature of the valleys depend partly upon their opening to the east or to the west, it may be said in general that the air, which is damp and fresh before and after sunset, is very hot in the course of the day. The difference of climate is indeed only to be felt upon the mountains; where the thermometer is at seventeen degrees in the shade, when, with the same exposure, it rises to twenty-five in the plain.

Some French adventurers take refuge at St. Domingo.

SPAIN was the sole and useless proprietor of this large possession, when some English and French, who had been driven out of St. Christophers, took refuge there in 1630. Though the northern coast, where they first settled, was in a manner forsaken, they considered, that being liable to be attacked by a common enemy, it was but prudent to secure a retreat. For this purpose they pitched upon Tortuga, a small island within two leagues of the great one; and twenty-five Spaniards, who were left to guard it, retired on the first summons.

The adventurers of both nations, now absolute masters of an island eight leagues long and two broad, found a pure air, but no river, and few springs. The mountains were covered with valuable woods, and the fertile plains only wanted the hand of the cultivator. The northern coast appeared to be inaccessible; but the southern had an excellent harbour commanded by a rock, which required only a battery of cannon to defend the entrance of the island.

This happy situation soon brought to Tortuga a multitude of those people who are in search either of fortune or liberty. The most moderate applied themselves to the culture of tobacco, which grew into repute, while the more active went to hunt the buffaloes at St. Domingo, and sold their hides to the Dutch. The most intrepid went out to cruise, and performed such bold exploits as will be long remembered.

This settlement alarmed the court of Madrid. Judging, by the losses they had already sustained, of the misfortunes they had still to expect, they gave orders for the destruction of the new colony. The general of the galleons chose, for executing his commission, the time when the brave inhabitants of Tortuga were out at sea or a-hunting, and with that barbarity which was then so familiar to his nation, hanged or put to the sword all those who were left at home. He then withdrew, without leaving any garrison, fully persuaded that such a precaution was needless, after the vengeance he had taken. But he soon found that cruelty is not the method to secure dominion.

The adventurers, informed of what had passed at Tortuga, and hearing at the same time that a body of five hundred

men, destined to harass them, was getting ready at St. Domingo, judged that the only way to escape the impending ruin, was to put an end to that anarchy in which they lived. They therefore gave up personal independence to social safety, and made choice of one Willis to be at their head; an Englishman, who had distinguished himself on many occasions by his prudence and valour. Under the guidance of this chief, at the latter end of 1638, they retook an island which they had possessed for eight years, and fortified it, that they might not lose it again.

The French soon felt the effects of national partiality. Willis having sent for as many of his countrymen as would enable him to give the law, treated the rest as subjects. Such is the natural progress of dominion; in this manner most monarchies have been formed. Companions in exile, war, or piracy, have chosen a leader, who soon usurps the authority of a master. At first he shares the power or the spoils with the strongest; till the multitude, crushed by the few, embolden the chief to assume the whole power to himself; and then monarchy degenerates into despotism. But such a series of revolutions can only take place in many years in great states. An island of sixteen leagues square is not calculated to be peopled only with slaves. The commander De Poincy, governor-general of the Windward islands, being informed of the tyranny of Willis, immediately sent forty Frenchmen from St. Christophers, who collected fifty more on the coast of St. Domingo. They landed at Tortuga; and having joined their countrymen on the island, they all together summoned the English to withdraw. The English, disconcerted at such an unexpected and vigorous action, and not doubting but that so much haughtiness was supported by a much greater force than it really was, evacuated the island, and never returned.

The Spaniards were not so tractable. They suffered so much from the depredations of the pirates who were daily sent out from Tortuga, that they thought their peace, their honour, and their interest, were equally concerned in getting that island once more in their own power. Three times they recovered it, and were three times driven out again. At last it remained in the hands of the French, in 1659, who evacuated it when they were firmly established

at St. Domingo, but without giving up the property of it. The government have always drawn from thence the woods necessary for ship-building, for the use of the artillery, and for the troops, till a rapacious minister took the island out of the hands of the treasury, in order to increase his family inheritance with it.

Their progress, however, was but slow; and they first attracted the attention of the mother country in 1665. Huntsmen, indeed, and pirates were continually seen hovering about from one island to another; but the number of planters, who were properly only the colonists, was exceedingly limited. The government was sensible how necessary it was to multiply them; and the care of this difficult work was committed to a gentleman of Anjou, name Bertrand Dogeron.

The court of Versailles acknowledged these enterprising men, when they had acquired some stability, and gave them a governor.

THIS man, whom nature had formed to be great in himself, independent of the smiles or frowns of fortune, had served fifteen years in the marines, when he went over to America in 1656. With the best contrived plans, he failed in his first attempts; but the fortitude he shewed in his misfortunes, made his virtues the more conspicuous; and the expedients he found out to extricate himself, heightened the opinion already entertained of his genius. The esteem and attachment he had inspired the French with at St. Domingo and Tortuga, induced the government to intrust him with the care of directing, or rather of settling, that colony.

The execution of this project was full of difficulties. It was necessary to establish the regularity of society upon the ruins of a ferocious anarchy; to subject the uncontrolled spirit of plunder to the sacred and severe authority of the laws; to revive sentiments of humanity in men hardened by the habit of crimes; to substitute the innocent instruments of agriculture to the destructive weapons of murder; to incite to a laborious life, barbarians accustomed to idleness, which is the general attendant upon rapine; to inspire violent men with patience; to induce them to prefer the tardy fruits of obstinate labour to rapid enjoyments, acquired by sudden exertions; to substitute a propensity for peace to

the thirst of blood ; to instil the fear of danger in the mind of him who delighted to expose himself to it, and the love of life in him who despised it ; it was necessary, in a word, that men who had never respected any thing, and who had always traded freely with all nations, should be prevailed upon to respect the privileges of an exclusive company formed, in 1664, for all the French settlements. When all this was effected, it then became necessary to allure, by the sweets of a well regulated government, new inhabitants into a country which had been traduced as a bad climate, and which has not yet known to be so fertile as it really was.

Dogeron, contrary to the general opinion, was in hopes he should succeed. A long intercourse with men he was to govern, had taught him how they were to be dealt with ; and his sagacity could suggest, or his honest soul adopt, no method of engaging them, but what was noble and just. The freebooters were determined to go in search of more advantageous latitudes ; he detained them by relinquishing to them that share of the booty which his post intitled him to, and by obtaining for them from Portugal commissions for attacking the Spaniards, even after they had made peace with France. This was the only method to make these men friends to their country, who otherwise would have turned enemies, rather than have renounced the hopes of plunder. The buccaneers, or hunters, who only wished to raise a sufficiency to erect habitations, found him ready to advance them money without interest, or to procure them some by his credit. As for the planters, whom he preferred to all the other colonists, he gave them every possible encouragement within the power of his industrious activity.

These happy alterations required only to be made permanent. The governor wisely considered, that women could alone perpetuate the happiness of the men, and the welfare of the colony, by promoting population. This was a natural one ; but it was necessary to consider what kind of women they must have been, from whom such pleasing effects could have been expected. Women born of honest parents, and well educated ; prudent and industrious women, who would one day become good wives and affectionate mothers. The total want of one sex in the new

settlement, condemned the other to celibacy. Dogeron thought of remedying this kind of indigence, which is the most difficult of any to bear, and which plunges a man into a state of melancholy, and inspires him with a disgust for life, deprived, for him, of its most powerful attraction. Fifty young women were sent over to him from France, and were soon disposed of at a very high price. Soon after, a like number arrived, and were obtained on still higher terms. They were sold as so many slaves, and bought as any common merchandize. It was money, and not the choice of their heart, that decided their lot. What expectations could be formed from alliances thus contracted? And yet this was the only way to gratify the most impetuous of all passions without quarrels, and to propagate the human race without bloodshed. All the inhabitants expected to have female companions from their own country, to alleviate and to share their fate. But they were disappointed; none were afterwards sent over, except abandoned women, vile and despicable wretches, who embarked with all the vices of the mind, and the diseases of the body, that are attached to an abject condition, which they were far from being ashamed of, since they shewed not the least reluctance to engage themselves for three years in the service of the men. This method of loading the colony with the refuse of the mother country, introduced such a profligacy of manners, that it became necessary to put a stop to so dangerous an expedient, but without substituting a better. By this neglect, St. Domingo lost a great many brave men, who could not live happy there, and was deprived of an increase of population which might have proceeded from the colonists who still preserved their attachment to the island. The colony has long felt, and perhaps feels to this day, the effects of so capital an error.

Notwithstanding this error, Dogeron found means to increase the number of planters to fifteen hundred in four years time, when there were only four hundred at his first coming. His successes were daily increasing; when they were suddenly stopped, in 1670, by an insurrection, which put the whole colony in a ferment. He did not incur the least censure for this unfortunate accident, in which he certainly had no share.

When this worthy man was appointed by the court of France to the government of Tortuga and St. Domingo, he could only prevail upon the inhabitants to acknowledge his authority, by giving them hopes that the ports under his jurisdiction should be open to foreigners. Yet such was the ascendant he gained over their minds, that by degrees he established in the colony the exclusive privilege of the company; which, in time, engrossed the whole trade. But this company became so elated with prosperity, as to be guilty of the injustice of selling their goods for two thirds more than had till then been paid to the Dutch. So destructive a monopoly revolted the inhabitants. They took up arms; and it was but a year after, that they laid them down, upon condition that all French ships should be free to trade with them, paying five per cent. to the company at coming and going out. Dogeron, who brought about this accommodation, availed himself of that circumstance to procure ships, seemingly destined to convey his crops into Europe, but which in fact were more the property of his colonists than his own. Every one shipped his own commodities on-board, allowing a moderate freight. On the return of the vessel, the generous governor caused the cargo to be exposed to public view, and every one took what he wanted, not only at prime cost, but upon trust, without interest, and even without notes of hand. Dogeron had imagined he should inspire them with sentiments of probity and greatness of soul, by taking no other security than their word. By this conduct, he exemplified how well he was acquainted with the human heart. The man whom we have degraded in his self-estimation, by mistrusting him, having nothing to lose in our minds, will not scruple to shew himself occasionally a rogue, a base villain, a traitor, an impostor, such as he really is, or even perhaps such as he is not, but such as he knows you think him to be; while the man, for whom we shall have shewn some share of esteem, will not debase himself if he should have deserved it, and will pique himself upon his honour, if he should not. To impute virtues or vices to men, is frequently the way to inspire them with either. In the midst of these parental offices Dogeron was cut off by death in 1675.

Ministers and depositaries of the royal authority, instead of those long and useless instructions drawn by clerks, as ignorant as they are rapacious, and sent to the persons whom you intend for the government of the colonies, who receive them with the utmost contempt, get the life of Dogeron written for their use, and let it be concluded with these words: POSSESS THE VIRTUES OF THIS MAN, AND LET YOUR CONDUCT CONFORM ITSELF TO HIS.

O Dogeron! thy neglected remains repose, perhaps, in some unknown part of St. Domingo, or of Tortuga. But if thy memory be extinct in those countries, if thy name, transmitted from fathers to children, be not pronounced with emotion; the descendants of those colonists, whose felicity you insured by your talents, by your disinterestedness, by your courage, by your patience, and by your labours, are ungrateful people, who do not deserve better governors than most of those who are sent to them.

Dogeron left no other inheritance than an example of patriotism, and of every humane and social virtue. Pouancey succeeded him. With the same qualifications as his uncle, he was not so great a man; because he followed his steps more from imitation, than from natural disposition. Yet the undiscerning multitude placed an equal confidence in both; and both had the honour and happiness to establish the colony upon a firm footing, without laws and without soldiers. Their natural good sense, and their known integrity, determined all differences to the satisfaction of both parties; and public order was maintained by that authority which is the natural consequence of personal merit.

So wise a constitution could not be lasting; it required too much virtue to make it so. In 1684 there was so visible an alteration, that, in order to establish a due subordination at St. Domingo, two administrators were called in from Martinico, where good policy was already in a great measure settled. These legislators appointed courts of judicature in the several districts, accountable to a superior council at Little Guave. In process of time, this jurisdiction growing too extensive, a like tribunal was erected in 1701, at Cape St. Francis, for the northern districts.

All these innovations could hardly be introduced without some opposition. It was to be feared that the hunters and

pirates, who composed the bulk of the people, averse from the restraints that were going to be laid upon them, would go over to the Spaniards and to Jamaica, allured by the prospect of great advantages. The planters themselves were under some temptation of this kind, as their trade was clogged with so many restrictions, that they were forced to sell their commodities at a very low price. The former were gained by persuasions; the latter by the prospect of a change in their situation, which was truly desperate.

Skins had been the first article of exportation from St. Domingo, as being the only things the buccaneers brought home. Tobacco was afterwards added by culture; and it was sold to great advantage to all nations. This trade was soon confined by an exclusive company; which, indeed, was in a short time abolished, but with no advantage for the sale of tobacco, since that was farmed out. The inhabitants, hoping to meet with some indulgence from government, as a reward for their submission, offered to give the king a fourth part of all the tobacco they should send into the kingdom, free of all charge, even of freight, upon condition they should have the entire disposal of the other three fourths. They made it appear, that this method would bring in a clearer profit to the revenue than the forty sols [*1s. 8d.*] per cent. which were paid by the farmer. Private interest opposed so reasonable a proposal.

In circumstances such as these, I am always astonished at the patience of the oppressed people. I say to myself, why do they not all assemble together at the house of the member of administration appointed to govern them, and address him in the following terms? "We are weary of an authority which vexes us. Retire from our country, and tell the person whose representative you are, that we are no rebels, because no rebellion can exist unless it be against a good king, and that he is only a tyrant against whom we have a right to revolt. You may add, that if he should be desirous of possessing a desert country he will soon be satisfied; for that we are all determined to perish, rather than live any longer miserable under an unjust government." The colonists did not give way to the suggestions of despair, but in their resentment they turned

their industry with success to the culture of indigo and cocoa. Cotton was a very promising article, because it had in former times greatly enriched the Spaniards; but they soon gave it up, for what reason is not known; and in a few years not a single cotton plant was to be seen.

Till then the labours had all been performed by hirelings, and by the poorest of the inhabitants. Some successful expeditions against the Spaniards procured them a few negroes. The number was increased by two or three French ships, and much more by prizes taken from the English during the war of 1688; by an invasion of Jamaica, from whence the French brought away three thousand blacks, in 1694. Without slaves, the culture of sugar could not be undertaken, but they alone were not sufficient. Money was wanting to erect buildings, and to purchase utensils. The profit some inhabitants made with the freebooters, who were always successful in their expeditions, enabled them to employ the slaves. They therefore undertook the planting of the canes, which convey the gold of Mexico to those nations whose only mines are fruitful lands.

*A company is
established for the
southern part of
St. Domingo.*

BUT the colony, which, though it had lost some of its Europeans, had still made a progress to the north and west, amidst the devastations that preceded the peace of Ryfwick, was yet but little advanced to the south. This part did not reckon a hundred inhabitants, all living in huts, and all extremely wretched. The government could fix upon no better expedient, to make some advantage of so extensive and so fine a country, than to grant, in 1698, for the space of half a century, the property of it to a company, which took the name of *St. Louis*.

This company engaged, under the penalty of forfeiting their charter, to form a capital of 1,200,000 livres [50,000*l.*] and to convey, in the course of the five first years, upon the lands granted to them, fifteen hundred white people, and two thousand five hundred negroes, with one hundred of the former and two hundred of the latter each of the following years: they were to distribute lands to whoever should be desirous of them. Each person, according to his wants and

abilities, obtained slaves that were to be paid for in three years; the men at the rate of six hundred livres [251.] and the women at the rate of four hundred and fifty livres [181. 15s.] The same credit was allowed for merchandize.

Upon these conditions, the charter insured to the new society the exclusive right of buying and selling throughout the whole territory assigned to them, but at the prices only that were settled in the other parts of the island. Even this dependence, oppressive to the colonist, was still alleviated, by allowing him to take, where he thought proper, whatever he was left in want of, and to pay out of his provisions, whatever he might have occasion to buy.

Monopoly, as a torrent that is lost in the abyss itself has made, works its own ruin by its rapaciousness. The company of St. Louis affords an instance, among many others, of the defects and abuses of exclusive associations. It was ruined by the knavery and extravagance of its agents; nor was the territory committed to its care the better for all these losses. The plantations and people that were found there, when the company gave up her rights to the government in 1720, were chiefly owing to the contraband traders.

It was during the long and bloody war begun on account of the Spanish succession, that this attempt had been made towards the improvement of the colony. It might have been expected to have made a speedy progress, when tranquillity was restored to both nations by the peace of Utrecht. These happy prospects were blasted by one of those calamities which it is not in the power of man to foresee. All the cocoa trees upon the colony died in 1715. Dogeron had planted the first in 1665. In process of time they had increased; especially in the narrow valleys to the westward. There were no less than twenty thousand upon some plantations; so that, though cocoa sold for no more than five sols [2½d.] a pound, it was become a plentiful source of wealth.

The colony of St. Domingo becomes the most flourishing in the New World.

Cultivations of greater importance amply compensated this loss, when a circumstance of the most distressing nature

threw the whole colony into consternation. A considerable number of its inhabitants, who had devoted twenty years labour in a burning climate, to lay up a competency to spend a comfortable old age in their native country, were returned to it, with a sufficient fortune to enable them to discharge their debts and purchase estates. Their commodities were paid them in bank notes, which proved useless to them. This fatal calamity obliged them to return poor into an island from whence they had departed rich; and reduced them, in their old age, to solicit employment from the very people who had formerly been their servants. The sight of so many unfortunate persons inspired a general detestation for the India company, which was considered as accountable for these calamities. This aversion, raised by mere compassion, was soon changed into a profound hatred, and not without sufficient reason.

The French colonies, since their establishment, received their slaves from the hands of the monopoly, and consequently received but few, and at an exorbitant price. Being reduced in 1713 to the impossibility of continuing their languid operations, the company themselves made the private merchants partners in their trade, upon condition that they should pay 15 livres [12s. 6d.] for every negro they should carry to the Windward islands, and 30 livres [1l. 5s.] for those whom they should introduce into St. Domingo. This new arrangement was followed by so great a degree of activity, that the government were at length induced to give up exclusive privileges, by granting in 1716 the Guinea trade to the ports of Rouen, of Bourdeaux, of Nantz, and of La Rochelle. It was to cost them two pistoles [16s. 8d.] for every slave who should arrive in America; but the commodities which were to be acquired by the sale of these unfortunate people, were exonerated from one half of the duties to which the other productions were subject. The inhabitants were just beginning to feel the good effects of this liberty, imperfect as it was, since it was confined to four ports, when St. Domingo was condemned again to receive its planters from the India company, who were not even obliged to furnish them with more than two thousand every year. We cannot, indeed, determine which is the most astonishing circumstance in the course of the events relative to the New World, either the rage of the

first conquerors who laid it waste, or the stupidity of the governments, which by a series of absurd regulations, seem to have proposed to themselves either to perpetuate the misery of the inhabitants, or to plunge them again into that state, whenever they entertained hopes of emerging from it.

In 1722, the agents of this odious company arrived in the colony. The buildings where they transacted their business were burnt to the ground. The ships that came to them from Africa were either denied admittance into the harbour, or not suffered to dispose of their cargoes. The chief governor, who endeavoured to oppose these disturbances, saw his authority despised, and his orders disobeyed, as they were not enforced by any compulsive power: he was even put under arrest. Every part of the island resounded with the clamours of sedition and the noise of arms. It is difficult to say how far these excesses would have been carried, had not government had the prudence to make concessions. In this one instance, the people did not suffer for the folly of their rulers; and the duke of Orleans convinced mankind, upon this occasion, that he was above the ordinary stamp of men, by avowing himself the author of a rebellion which he had excited by a defective institution, and which, under a ruler less enlightened or less moderate, would have been severely punished. After two years of trouble and confusion, the inconveniences resulting from anarchy disposed the minds of all parties to peace, and tranquillity was restored without having recourse to violent measures.

From that period, no colony ever so much improved its time as that of St. Domingo. It advanced with the utmost rapidity to a prosperous state. The two unfortunate wars which annoyed its seas, have only served to compress its strength, which has increased the more since the cessation of hostilities. A wound is soon healed when the constitution is sound. Diseases themselves, in the state, as well as in the body, are a kind of remedies, which, by the expulsion of the vitiated humours, add new vigour to a robust habit of body. Those disorders that are fatal to either the one or the other, are such as, being slow in their progress, keep them in a state of perpetual indisposition, and lead them imperceptibly to the grave. But after diseases

that are acute have brought on a violent crisis, the delirium ceases and the debility goes off; and as the strength is restored a more regular and uniform motion is established, which promises a lasting duration to the machine. So war seems to strengthen and support national spirit in many states of Europe, which might be enervated and corrupted by the prosperity of commerce and the enjoyments of luxury. The immense losses which almost equally attend victory and defeat, excite industry and quicken labour. Nations will recover their former splendour, provided their rulers will let them follow their own bent, and not pretend to direct their steps. This principle is peculiarly applicable to France, where nothing more is requisite to prosperity than to give a free course to the activity of the inhabitants. Wherever nature leaves them at full liberty, they succeed in giving her powers their full scope. St. Domingo affords a striking instance of what may be expected from a good soil, and an advantageous situation in the hands of Frenchmen.

Settlements formed in the southern part of St. Domingo.

THE southern part, which is occupied by France, extends from Pitre Point to Cape Tiburon. At the period of their conquests in the New World, the Spaniards had built upon this coast two large villages, which they forsook in less prosperous times. The vacated places were not immediately occupied by the French, who must be apprehensive of the vicinity of St. Domingo, where the chief force of that power, upon whose ruin they were rising, was concentrated. Their privateers, who commonly assembled at the little island called Vache island, to cruise upon the Castilians, and divide their spoils, encouraged some planters to begin a small settlement upon the continent in 1673. It was soon destroyed, nor was it resumed till a considerable time after. The company appointed to settle and extend this colony did not fulfil their obligations. Its progress was owing to the English of Jamaica, and to the Dutch of Curassou, who having resolved to carry slaves to this place, bought up the produce of a land, which they themselves alone contributed to improve. It was not till 1740, that the merchants of the mother country began to attend to this settlement.

From this period they frequented this part of the colony a little, notwithstanding the winds, which often render the sailing out of this road tedious and difficult.

The part which is to the east of all the rest is called Jaquemel. It consists of three parishes, which occupy thirty-six leagues of the coast, and run into a moderate and very unequal degree of depth. This vast space is filled up with sixty plantations of coffee, sixty-two of indigo, and sixty of cotton. Most of their planters are poor, and can never grow very rich. A soil, which is in general full of hills, stony, and exposed to droughts, prevents them from aspiring to wealth. This can only be done by those who divide the plain of Jaquemel. There are twenty very spacious habitations, of which ten only are watered, though they be all susceptible of this advantage. It is there, that in an exhausted soil, indigo, which would require a virgin soil, is cultivated. When hands, and other means for carrying on an extensive culture, shall no longer be wanting, sugar will be substituted to it, which succeeds as well as can be desired, in the only plantation where the colonists have begun to cultivate it.

Aquin hath an extent of fifteen leagues along the borders of the sea, and of three, four, and sometimes six, leagues in the inland parts. This settlement reckons forty plantations of indigo, twenty of coffee, and nine of cotton. Its mountains, less elevated than those which are contiguous to them, on that account enjoy only the benefit of a few springs, and a small quantity of rain, and promise nothing but great abundance of cotton, which will undoubtedly be one day required of them. With regard to its plains, they were formerly in a flourishing state; but the droughts, which have gradually increased in proportion as the country hath been cleared, have diminished more and more the quality of the indigo, which constituted all the riches of the colony. This plant, which leaves the ground almost habitually exposed to the heat of a burning sun, should be replaced by sugar, which would keep the earth covered for eighteen months together, and will preserve in it for a long time the smallest degree of moisture. Four of the most wealthy inhabitants have already made this change in their plantations. The nature of the soil will allow twenty-five colonists to follow their example; and

they will no doubt resolve upon it, when they shall have acquired the means sufficient for that purpose, and when the waters of the river *Serpente* shall have been prudently distributed. In the present state of things, all the productions of that district are collected in one town only, which is far advanced in the inland parts. The impossibility of conveying them to the coast in the rainy seasons, and the unavoidable expences of the carriage, even in the most favourable times, had suggested the idea of forming this staple upon the borders of a deep bay, where the commodities are shipped: but this situation doth not afford one acre of ground fit for cultivation; there is no sweet water to be found in it, and the stagnating waters of the sea corrupt the air. These reasons have caused this project to be laid aside, for its inconveniencies would be greater than the advantages derived from it.

St. Lewis is a kind of town, which, though built at the beginning of the century, hath no more than fifty houses. The forming of this settlement was determined upon, on account of an exceeding good harbour, even for ships of the line. Considerable fortifications were erected upon a small island, situated at the entrance of the harbour, which were destroyed by the English in 1748, and have never since been restored. The territory of this district extends five or six leagues along the coast. Its mountains covered with acacia wood, are most of them susceptible of culture. Its plain, which is uneven, hath some fertile spots upon it, and its numerous morasses might be dried up. There are no more than twenty plantations of coffee, fifteen of indigo, six of cotton, and two of sugar, here. This last production would succeed in ten or twelve plantations, especially if they were watered by the river *St. Lewis*, which, it is thought, they might easily be.

Cavaillon doth not occupy more than three leagues upon the borders of the ocean. This is a long neck of land, which extends eight or nine leagues up the country. It is divided by a large river, which, in times of heavy rains, unfortunately overflows to a considerable distance, and occasions great ravages. At the distance of two leagues from its mouth is a small town, where the vessels arrive, and where they take in the productions, which are furnished by twenty plantations of coffee, ten of indigo, six of cotton,

and seventeen of sugar. The number of the last might be doubled, with facility, in a plain which hath five or six thousand squares in extent ; but the three most flourishing of those which exist have scarce yielded half of what they might produce, and the others only yield a trifling produce, and of a bad quality. The mountains, though covered with an excellent soil, do not compensate for this deficiency. The districts granted by government will remain uncultivated, till roads shall have been made for the conveyance of the productions. This undertaking, which is beyond the means of the inhabitants, ought to be executed by the troops. Idleness, and infectious morasses, have hitherto deprived the soldiers of their industry, and have made them perish upon the banks of the sea. The freshness of elevated places, the wholesome air which is breathed there, a moderate share of labour, and the easy circumstances which it would be proper they should enjoy ; in a word, all these concurring causes, would they not maintain them in their natural strength ? would they not insure their preservation ?

The plain at the bottom of Vache island contains twenty-five thousand squares, of a soil which is excellent everywhere, except in some parts that have been covered with gravel by the torrents, and a few morasses, which might be easily dried up. There have been successively formed here eighty-three sugar plantations, and there might still be fifty more established. Those which exist have scarce more than one third of their territory cultivated, and yet they yield an immense quantity of raw sugar. From this we may judge how much the whole of the grounds would furnish, if they were properly cultivated. One might depend upon a produce so much the more regular, as the rains do not fail so often in this district as in the others, and as there are three rivers running through it, which offer themselves, as it were, for the watering of all the plantations.

The sugar and the indigo which grow in the plain, the coffee and the cotton, which descend from the mountains, are all carried to the town of Cayes, formed by near four hundred houses, which are all built in a marshy territory, and are most of them surrounded with stagnant waters.

The air which is breathed in that place is equally deficient in elasticity as in salubrity.

This staple seems to have been placed, as it were, fortuitously in the bottom of a shallow bay, which grows more and more so, and has but three channels. The anchorage is so confined, and so dangerous, during the equinox, that ships which happen to be there at that season are frequently lost. The great quantity of mud brought thither by the waters of a torrent on the south side, has increased to such a degree, that in twenty years time there will be no entrance. The canal, formed by the vicinity of Vache island, is of no use, and only obstructs the navigation. The creeks in this place are the resort of the privateers of Jamaica. As they cruize there without sails, and can observe without being seen, they always have the advantage of the wind over such vessels as are hindered, by the violence and constant struggle of the winds, from passing above the island. If it were possible that any men of war could put into this bad harbour, the impossibility of surmounting this obstacle and that of the currents, in order to get to windward of the island, would oblige them to follow the track of merchant ships. Doubling, therefore, one after another, the point of Labacou, on account of the shoals, these ships would get between the land and the enemy's fire, with the disadvantage of the wind, and would infallibly be destroyed by an inferior squadron.

The town of Cayes is not better than its harbour. It contains 280 houses, all sunk into swampy ground, and most of them surrounded with stagnant water. The air of this spot is foul and unwholesome; and on this account, as well as the badness of the harbour, it has often been wished by the court of Versailles, that the trade with the mother country could be transferred to St. Lewis. But the efforts that have been made to effect this, have hitherto been unsuccessful; and will for ever be so; because it is reasonable to suppose, that exchanges will always be established on that spot where the productions are most plentiful, and where the consumption is greatest. To pretend to thwart this order of things prescribed by nature, would be to retard to no purpose the progress of a good settlement. Even the caprices of industry should be indulged by government. The least uneasiness in the trader creates distrust. Political and military reasonings will ne-

ver prevail against those of interest. Trade only flourishes in a soil of its own choosing. It is alarmed at every kind of restraint.

All that the French ministry could reasonably propose, would be to withdraw the tribunals from St. Lewis, which neither is, nor ever will be, of any consequence, in order to transfer them to Cayes, where the population and the productions, which are already considerable, must increase greatly; to dig a bed for a torrent, the violent overflowings of which frequently occasion inexpressible ravages; and to fortify, and render the town more wholesome. Both might be effected, by digging a ditch all round the town, and the rubbish would serve to fill up the marshes within. The ground, being raised higher by this contrivance, would consequently grow drier; the water, which would be brought down by a gentle descent from the river into this deep ditch, would, by the assistance of some fortifications, secure the town from the attacks of the privateers; and would even afford a temporary defence, and allow time to capitulate with a small squadron.

Greater improvements might and ought to be made. Why not allow a factitious harbour to an important mart, which will soon be stopped? The merchant ships that seek shelter in what is called the Flemish bay, two leagues to windward of Cayes, seem to point out this spot as the harbour that this town stands in need of. It would contain a considerable number of men of war, safe from all winds; would afford them several careening places; would admit of their doubling the Vache island to windward, and enable them to carry on with the town, alongside the coast, an intercourse, which, being protected by batteries properly disposed, would keep the privateers in awe. The only inconvenience is, that the shipworm is more apt to injure the vessel in this place than in other parts, on account of the nature of the bottom and the calmness of the sea.

Abacou is a peninsula, which was formerly in a flourishing state, on account of the abundance and the quality of its indigo. But since this voracious plant hath destroyed every principle of vegetation upon the numerous little hillocks of that place, it is nowhere cultivated with any success but upon the borders of the sea, which are enriched with the spoils of the upper grounds. This decrease hath

determined a certain number of colonists to transfer their industry to other parts. Those who, either from habit or reason, have persevered in remaining on their plantations, have enlarged them as much as they have found it convenient. They still maintain themselves by suffering part of their grounds to lie fallow, while the other part is cultivated. But this resource is not equal to what it would be in Europe. This is the opinion of the inhabitants themselves, who direct their industry towards the culture of sugar, as much as their fortune and their credit will allow them.

It is upon the cultivated and exhausted heights of this quarter, that it would be proper to breed cattle. Government were in an error, when they ceded the mountains, upon condition that they should be covered with horned cattle. Besides that a virgin soil could not be reasonably employed in pasture ground, as it might be rendered more productive to the state; it was impossible to expect that enterprising men would make themselves shepherds, when they could derive greater advantages from their grounds, in whatever culture they might employ them. It may even be affirmed, that the cattle will always be infinitely scarce at St. Domingo, even in those places which cannot be employed for any other purpose, as long as the monopoly of slaughter houses shall subsist in the colony.

Coteaux occupies about ten leagues of the shore, and is from two to five leagues in depth. Small creeks are everywhere found, where it is easy to land; but none of them offer a secure shelter in rough weather. This quarter contains twenty-four plantations of coffee, three of cotton, and sixty-six of indigo. This last production hath less decreased in quantity, and less degenerated in quality, at this place, than anywhere else; advantages which must be attributed to the nature and to the disposition of the territory. The time, however, doth not seem far distant, when the borders of the sea will display fourteen or fifteen sugar plantations formed upon the ruins of the ancient cultures. Habit, and the facility of obtaining slaves by contraband connections, will facilitate this revolution.

Tiburón, which hath ten leagues of extent upon the borders of the sea, and two, three, or four, in the inland parts, terminates this coast. The road of this cape doth

not offer a sufficient shelter against storms; but well-disposed batteries may render it a place of retreat for the French vessels, which are pursued in time of war in these latitudes. This settlement hath four habitations for cotton, thirty for indigo, and thirty-seven for coffee. Four sugar plantations have been established there since the peace, and their number may be increased to sixteen.

ALL the settlements which we have just taken a review of, languish in a state of greater or less misery. Accordingly, the sales and the purchases are not made there with metals, as in the northern or eastern part of the colony. On the southern, the merchandize of Europe is exchanged for the productions of America. This savage practice occasions eternal discussions, innumerable frauds, and ruinous delays, which keep off the navigators, those especially who carry on the slave trade.

Means by which the cultures of the southern part of the colony might be improved.

It is a fact, which is but too well proved, that the annual loss of negroes amounts naturally to one twentieth part of them, and that accidents carry off a fifteenth part. From this circumstance it follows, that the country we are speaking of, and in which upwards of forty thousand slaves are collected, must have seen five-and-twenty thousand of them die in ten years time. Eight thousand one hundred and thirty-four Africans, who have been introduced by French privateers from 1763 to 1773, have not certainly been able to fill up this great void. What would then have been the fate of those settlements if the smuggling trade had not supplied the deficiency? But this is not the whole.

* The southern part of St. Domingo hath a great disadvantage. The mountains that command it, deprive it, as well as the western coast, during the space of about six months, of the rains of the north and the north-east, which fertilize the northern parts of the country. It will then remain untilld or be ill cultivated, till the waters of the rivers shall have supplied the place of those from the sky. This operation, which would increase the productions by two thirds, requires a vast capital and a great number of

slaves. The trade of France, whether from inability or mistrust, doth not furnish them.

What measures ought government to pursue? They should lay open that part of the colony for the space of ten or fifteen years, freely to all foreigners. The English would carry negroes to it, and the Dutch would advance money at an interest which might very well be sustained by the cultures of the New World. The success of this step would be infallible, if laws were made which should give a proper degree of validity to the credit of the two nations.

Settlements formed to the west of St. Domingo.

THE western part of the colony differs greatly from the southern. The first settlement, of any consequence, which is found there, is that of Jeremiah, or the Great bay. It occupies twenty leagues of coast, from Cape Tiburon to Petit-Trou, and extends from four to six leagues in the inland parts. As this district is still an infant settlement, the borders of the sea only are inhabited, and these even very little. All the productions, however, which enrich the rest of the island are cultivated here. There is also one production which is peculiar to it, and this is cacao, which could not succeed in more open places; and one hundred thousand pounds weight are annually gathered. The staple is a small town agreeably built and situated upon an eminence, where the air is exceedingly wholesome. It must in time become a considerable mart. Unfortunately it hath got a bad harbour: whenever the north winds blow with any degree of violence, the ships are obliged either to take refuge at Cape *Dame Marie*, where no measures have been taken to protect them, or to seek for the island of Caymites, which is exposed to the inroads of the pirates.

The Little Guave was formerly in great reputation, which was owing to its harbour, where ships of all sizes found an excellent anchorage, conveniencies for refitting, and a shelter from all winds. It was an asylum the most convenient for adventurers, whose only design was to appropriate to themselves the spoils of the Spanish navigators. This place hath lost much of its celebrity since cultures have succeeded to piracy; it owes the small degree of consider-

ation it still retains to the richness of its territorial productions, which are limited to fifteen plantations of sugar, twenty of coffee, and twelve of indigo or cotton; and still more to the produce of twenty-four plantations of sugar, fifty of indigo, sixty-seven of coffee, and thirty-four of cotton, which are poured into its staple from the parishes of Petit-Trou, Lance-à-Veaux, St. Michael, and the Great Guave. It is unhealthy, and will always be so, till a slope hath been made for the river Abaret, the stagnant waters of which form infectious morasses.

The dependencies of Leogane have some degree of extent: twenty habitations are reckoned among them destined for indigo, forty for coffee, ten for cotton, and fifty-two for sugar. Before the earthquake of 1770, which destroyed every thing, the town had fifteen regular built streets, and four hundred houses of stone, which are at present only built of wood. Its position, which is upon a narrow, fertile, and well-watered plain, would be excellent, if a navigable canal were made to open an easy communication with its harbour, which is no more than a mile distant.

If it were advisable to have a fortified town on the western coast, undoubtedly Leogane would claim the preference. It stands upon plain ground, is not commanded by any eminence, nor can it be annoyed by any ships. But to secure it from being surprised, it should at least have been surrounded with a deep ditch, which might easily be filled with water without the least expence. This might have been effected at a much more reasonable rate than the works which have been begun at Port-au-Prince.

The western part of the island was the first that was cultivated by the French, that being at the greatest distance from the Spanish forces, which they had then reason to fear. This being in the centre of the coasts that belonged to them, the seat of government was fixed there. It was first settled at the Little Guave, hath been since transferred to Leogane, and hath at last been fixed at Port-au-Prince in 1750.

The territory of this district contains forty plantations of sugar, fifty of coffee, and fifteen of cotton. This produce is increased by several still more considerable, which arise from the rich plains of the Cul-de-Sac, of the Arcahaye,

and of the mountains of Mirbalais. In this point of view, Port-au-Prince is an important staple, to which a protection ought to be granted sufficient to prevent any surprise, and to secure the retreat of the citizens. But let us consider whether it was proper to concentrate in this spot the civil and military authority, the tribunals, the troops, the ammunition, the provisions, and the arsenals; every thing, in a word, which contributes to the support of a great colony.

The place that was made choice of for the intended capital, is an opening of about 1,400 toises long in a direct line, and commanded on both sides. Two harbours, formed by some islets, have afforded a pretence for this injudicious choice. The harbour intended for trading vessels being now almost filled up, can no longer admit men of war with safety; and the great harbour designed for these, being as unwholesome as the other, from the exhalations of the small islands, neither is nor can be defended by any thing against a superior enemy.

A small squadron might even block up a stronger one in so unfavourable a position. Gonave, which divides the bay in two, would leave a free and safe passage for the smaller squadron; the sea winds would prevent the other squadron from getting up to it; the land winds, by facilitating the exit of the enemy's ships from the harbour, would leave them the choice of retreating through either of the outlets of St. Mark and Leogane; and all other circumstances being equal, they would always have the advantage of keeping Gonave between them and the French squadron.

But what would be the consequence, if the French squadron should prove the weakest? Disabled and pursued, it could never gain a shelter that runs so deep into land as Port-au-Prince, before the conqueror had taken advantage of its defeat. If the disabled ships should reach the place, nothing could hinder the enemy from pursuing them almost in a line, and even from entering the king's harbour, where they would take refuge.

The best of all stations for a cruise is that where one may choose whether one will accept or decline the fight, where there is but a small space to guard, where the whole may be viewed from one central point, where a safe anchorage may be found at every tack, where one may be concealed without going far, procure wood and water at

pleasure, and sail in open seas, in which there is nothing to fear but from squalls. These are the advantages that an enemy's Squadron will always have over the French ships at anchor in Port-au-Prince. A single frigate might safely come and bid them defiance, and be sufficient to intercept any trading ships that should attempt to go in or out without a convoy.

Nevertheless, a harbour so unfavourable as this, hath determined the building of the town. It extends along the sea-shore the space of 1,200 toises, that is, nearly along the opening which the sea has made in the centre of the western coast. In this great extent, which runs in to the depth of 550 toises, are, as it were, lost, 558 houses or dwelling-places, dispersed in 29 streets. The drainings of the torrents that fall from the hills, render this place always damp, without supplying it with good water. Add to all this, the little security there is in a place commanded on the land side, and on the sea side easy of access in all parts. Even the small islands which divide the harbours would be so far from defending the town from an invasion, that they would only serve to cover the landing.

Such is the spot, which on account of private interests, hath been unfortunately chosen to build the capital of St. Domingo upon. It hath been entirely destroyed by an earthquake which happened in 1770. This was the time to have brought about an alteration, and there was the more reason to expect it, as there is the greatest probability that the new town is built upon the cavern of the volcano. But these hopes were frustrated; the private houses and the public edifices have all been rebuilt.

Sleep on then, thou senseless inhabitant of St. Domingo, since thou art so intrepid; sleep on, upon the slight and thin layer of earth which parts thee from the gulf of fire that burns under thy pillow. Remain ignorant of the danger with which thou art threatened, since thy apprehensions would tend only to embitter every instant of thy life, without preserving thee from it.—Consider not how much thine existence is precarious. Be not informed, that it depends upon the casual fall of a stream, or upon the infiltration, already perhaps far advanced, of the small quantity of waters by which thou art surrounded in the subterranean cauldron, which thy habitation hath been doomed to cover. If

thou shouldst emerge from thy stupidity only for an instant, what would become of thee ! Thou wouldst behold death moving under thy feet. The hollow sound of the torrents of sulphur expanded, would continually assail thine ears. Thou wouldst feel the oscillation of the layer of earth that supports thee. Thou wouldst hear it open with tumultuous noise. Thou wouldst fly from thy house, and run distractedly about the streets. Thou wouldst think that the walls of thy dwelling, and all the edifices, were shaking, and that thou wert going to descend in the midst of their ruins into the gulf which is prepared, if not for thee, at least for thy unfortunate posterity. The completion of the disaster that awaits them will be shorter than my account of it. But if there exist a justice to avenge great crimes ; if there be an infernal region, it is there, I trust, that the villains, who, blinded by views of self-interest, have imposed upon the throne, and whose fatal counsels have raised this monument of ignorance and stupidity upon which thou dwellest, and which hath perhaps but an instant of duration ; it is there that they will go, and groan perpetually in unextinguishable flames.

St. Marc, which hath only two hundred houses, but pleasantly built, is situated at the bottom of a bay, which is crowned with a crescent of little hills filled with freestone. Two rivulets run through the town, and its air is pure. There are to be found upon its territory no more than ten plantations of sugar, thirty-two of indigo, one hundred of coffee, and seventy-two of cotton. Its harbour, however, though a bad one, attracts a great number of navigators, and it is indebted for this advantage to the riches of the Artibonite.

This is an exceeding good plain, fifteen leagues in length, and of unequal breadth, from four to nine leagues ; it is divided into two parts by the river from which it takes its name, and which flows with rapidity along the highest part of the plain, after having run through some of the Spanish possessions and the country of Mirbalais. The elevation of these waters hath suggested the idea of dividing them, the possibility of doing which hath been geometrically demonstrated. So great is the power of enlightened nations over nature itself ; but a project founded on the basis of

mathematical knowledge, requires the utmost caution in the execution.

In the present state of things, the plantations formed upon the right shore are exposed to frequent droughts, which often disappoint the best grounded expectations. Those of the left shore, which are evidently placed much lower, are well watered, and have risen by this advantage to the highest perfection in their cultures. The proprietors of the former hasten the spreading of the waters, which is guarded against by the latter, who are apprehensive of seeing their grounds overflowed.

If, as it is generally understood, these are effectual methods to render one part fertile, without reducing the other part to barrenness, why should this operation be postponed, by which an increase of ten or twelve millions weight of sugar might be obtained? This increase would be still more considerable, if a method could be devised to drain that part of the coast which is overflowed by the waters of the Artibonite. Thus it is, that the civilized man, by changing the course of rivers, makes the earth subservient to his use. The fertility he imparts to the lands can only justify his conquests; if indeed art and labour, laws and virtues, may be allowed in process of time to atone for the injustice of invasion.

The territory of the Gonaves is flat, tolerably even, and very dry; it hath two plantations of sugar, ten of coffee, six of indigo, and thirty of cotton; this last production might be easily multiplied, upon a great extent of sand, which at present doth not appear proper for any other kind of culture. But should the waters of the Artibonite be ever prudently distributed, a considerable part of this large district would be covered with sugar canes. It would then be perceived, that the seat of government ought to have been placed in its port, which is excellent, and might be easily fortified. Another advantage which must necessarily add to the value of this country, is, that mineral waters are to be found there. They were neglected for a long while, in a colony which is always full of sick persons or convalescents; but at length in 1772, baths and fountains, commodious habitations, and an hospital for soldiers and sailors, were built there.

*Reflections upon
the little concern
which the mother
country and the
colonies have for
each other.*

THE colonies present us with some contradictory phenomena which it is impossible to deny, and which it is difficult to conciliate.

There can scarce be a doubt, but that we hold the productions of the colonies in high estimation. Why therefore do we concern ourselves so little about the prosperity and the preservation of the colonists? If the violence of a hurricane shall have buried thousands of unfortunate people under the ruins of their dwellings, and shall have laid waste their possessions; this is an event which takes up our attention less than a duel fought, or an assassination committed, at home. Should a vast country of the distant continent continue to be ravaged by some epidemical disease, we talk of the matter at home with more coolness, than of the uncertain return of the small-pox after inoculation. If the horrors of famine should reduce the inhabitants of St. Domingo, or of Martinico, to seek for their food in the country, or to devour one another, we are less concerned at such a catastrophe than at the calamity of a hail-storm, that should have destroyed the harvest in some one of our villages. It is natural enough to think, that this indifference is the effect of distance, and that the colonists are not more affected with our misfortunes than we are with theirs.

But it will be said, that our towns are contiguous to our country places, and that we have the misery of their inhabitants incessantly in our view. We are not the less desirous of plentiful harvests of all kinds from them, and yet it is scarce possible, that there should be a greater neglect shewn for the encouragement, the multiplication, and the preservation, of the husbandmen. From whence can this surprising contradiction arise? It must be, that we are mad respecting the manner in which we treat our colonists, and both inhuman and mad in our conduct with our farmers, since both at home and at a distance we require the same things; and that yet we will not adopt the means of procuring them in either of those places.

But how doth it happen, that this inconsistency of the people should likewise extend to the government? It is because there is, according to all appearances, a greater spirit of

jealousy than of true interest, either in the acquisition or the preservation of this species of distant property; it is because the sovereigns scarce reckon the colonists as among the number of their subjects. I shall not scruple to declare, since it is my opinion, that an irruption of the sea, which should swallow up this portion of their domain, would affect them less than the loss of it from the invasion of a rival power. They care very little whether these men live or die, provided they do not belong to any one else.

I shall therefore first address myself to the sovereigns, and I shall tell them,—either leave these men to their fate, or assist them. I shall then address myself to the colonists, and I shall say,—implore the assistance of the mother country, to which you are subject; and if you should experience a denial, break off your connections with it. It is too much to be obliged to support at once misery, indifference, and slavery.

But wherefore are the colonies worse regulated, and more unhappy still, under those powers to whose strength and splendour they are the most necessary? It is because those powers are still more absurd than we are; and being commercial states, the spirit of their administration is still more cruel. It is because, in imitation of the farmer, who is not certain of enjoying a new lease, they exhaust a land, which from one year to another may pass into the hands of a new possessor. When the provinces of a state are contiguous, those that are nearest the frontiers are treated with most management. It is directly contrary with the colonies. They are oppressed, from the sole apprehension, that in circumstances of a perilous nature the care that might have been bestowed upon them should be entirely thrown away.

THE western part of the colony is separated from the northern part by the mole of St. Nicholas, which lies on both coasts. At the head of the cape is a good, safe, and commodious, harbour. It stands directly opposite to Point Maizi, in the island of Cuba, and seems naturally destined, by this position, to become the most important post in all America for the convenience of navigation. The opening of the bay is 1,450 toises broad.

The road leads to the harbour, and the harbour to the basin. All this great recess is wholesome, though the waters of the sea are almost in a state of stagnation there. The basin, which seems as if made for the purpose of careening, has not the inconvenience of close harbours; it is open to the west and north winds; and yet, if they blow ever so hard, they can never interrupt or retard any work that is done in the port. The peninsula, where the harbour is situated, rises gradually to the plains, which stand upon a very large basis; it seems, as it were, a single mountain, with a broad and flat top, descending with a gentle slope to unite with the rest of the island.

The mole of St. Nicholas was long neglected by the inhabitants of St. Domingo. The bare hills and flat rocks it abounded with, afforded nothing worth their notice. The use which the English made of it during the last war, has rendered it of some kind of consequence. The French ministry, enlightened even by their enemies, settled in 1767 a staple there, where foreign navigators might freely barter the wood and cattle, of which the colony was in want, for its molasses and brandy, which were rejected by the mother country. This communication, which, by a reasonable toleration, and industrious smuggling, hath been extended to several other objects, gave birth to a town, which at present consists of three hundred wooden houses, brought ready built from New England.

At some distance from the port, but still within the district of the mole, is the town of Lombardopolis. The Acadians and Germans, who had been carried there in 1763, perished at first with astonishing rapidity. This is constantly the fate that attends all new settlements between the tropics. The few of these unfortunate people that have outlived the fatal effects of the climate, and those of disappointment and poverty, were wishing only to quit this barren soil, when the transactions carried on in their neighbourhood, revived, in some measure, their hopes. They cultivate provisions, fruits, and vegetables; which they sell to the ships, or to the inhabitants of the port, and even a small quantity of coffee and cotton for Europe.

The next settlement on the north coast, after the mole of St. Nicholas, is called Port Paix. It owed its origin to the neighbourhood of Tortuga, whose inhabitants took

refuge there when they forlook that island. The grounds were cleared so early, that this is one of the healthiest spots in St. Domingo, and has long since attained the utmost degree of riches and population it is capable of; but these are not very considerable, though industry has been carried so far as even to pierce through mountains for the conveyance of water to moisten the grounds. Port Paix is on all sides so difficult of access, that it is in a manner cut off from the rest of the colony.

The little Saint Louis, the Borgne, Port Margot, Limbé, and Lacul, have likewise no communication with each other. These places are divided by rivers, which overflow and ravage the best lands. Accordingly, they are in general too cold for sugar-canes to thrive in them. The waters of these torrents ought to be confined in large and deep beds. After these labours are finished, it would be an easy matter to construct bridges, which would draw the inhabitants nearer together, would enable them to communicate their improvements to each other, and would make them enjoy the advantages of a better regulated society. The plantations of indigo would then be improved, and those of sugar would be multiplied, while the coffee would not be forsaken; this plant is considered as the best of the kind in the colony. Limbé alone collects two millions weight of it, as good as that of Martinico.

THIS is very little, if indeed it be any thing, in comparison of the productions of the plain of the cape, which is twenty leagues in length, and about four in breadth. Few lands are better watered; but there is not a river where a sloop can get up above three miles. All this great space is intersected with straight roads forty feet wide, and planted on both sides with hedges of citron trees. These roads would have been perfect in their kind, had they been ornamented with tall trees, which would have afforded a delightful shade for travellers, and prevented that scarcity of wood which this district already begins to feel. This is the country of America which produces the greatest quantity of sugar, and of the best sort. The plain is terminated by a ridge of mountains, which varies in

*Great importance
of the town of
Cape St. Francis
situated upon the
northern coast of
St. Domingo.*

depth from four to eight leagues. Few of them are very high; several of them may be cultivated to the very summit, and they are all intersected at intervals with an infinite number of plantations of coffee, and some exceeding fine plantations of indigo.

Although the French had been early acquainted with the value of a territory, the fertility of which surpasses all that can be said of it, yet they did not begin to cultivate it till 1670, the time when their apprehensions of the Spaniards, who till then had remained in force in the neighbourhood, were dissipated. A calvanist, named Gobin, one of those whom the spirit of intoleration in religious matters began to drive out from their native country, went and reared the first habitation at this cape. More houses were built as the grounds were cleared. This settlement had already made such progress in the space of twenty years, as to excite the jealousy of the English. They joined their forces with those of Spain, and, attacking it both by land and sea, in 1695, they took, plundered, and reduced it to ashes.

A great advantage might have been made of this misfortune. Interest, which is the primary founder of all colonies, had induced the inhabitants to choose, in a harbour that is three leagues in circumference, the foot of a hill for the portion of the cape, because it was the place that lay most convenient for the anchorage. A situation more wholesome, more convenient, and more spacious, might have been chosen. This was not attended to; but the town was rebuilt, where it ought never to have been built, in a bottom, where the rays of the sun are rendered more scorching by the reflection of the mountains; and which never can be refreshed by the coolness of the land breezes. Yet such is the richness of the adjacent country, that this settlement hath continually increased.

The cape is now cut by twenty-nine straight streets, into 225 clusters of houses, which amount to 900; but these streets are too narrow, and having no slope, though the soil itself be prominent in the centre, are always dirty; for, as they are paved only in the middle, the kennels, which are not even on each side, gather into puddles and common sewers, instead of draining off the waters.

The old square of Notre-Dame, and the church built

with stones brought from Europe that terminates it ; the new square of Clugny, where the market hath been fixed ; the fountains that embellish both of these monuments ; the governor's house, the barracks, the theatre ; none of these public edifices, in a word, would attract the notice of the curious traveller, who should have any idea of the principles of architecture. But if nature had endowed him with sensibility, his heart would expand at the bare mention of the house called *La Providence*.

Most of the adventurers who first come into the colony, are destitute of resources and talents, and before they have acquired industry to procure subsistence, become subject to disorders that are often fatal. A humane and generous citizen founded at the cape two habitations for these helpless and distressed persons, where the men and the women are severally provided with every thing they want. This fine institution, the only one of the kind in the New World, and which would never have been sufficiently supported by authority, nor sufficiently enriched by the gifts of the citizens, had seen its revenues gradually decrease by the dishonesty of those who administered them, and by the neglect of government.

Is it then impossible, that any good institution should subsist among mankind ? Will the rich still continue to attack the poor, even in their asylum, if the presence of the gallows doth not restrain them ! Infamous wretches ! ye know not all the atrociousness of your conduct ; if one of your fellow-creatures were brought before you, convicted of having seized upon a passenger in the night time, and of having presented a pistol to his breast in order to get his purse, to what kind of punishment would you sentence him ? Be it what it may, you deserve still a greater one. You unite baseness, inhumanity, and prevarication, to the theft ; and to what species of theft ; you take from him who is dying with hunger, the bread that has been intrusted to you for his use. You strip misery itself abandoned to your care, and you do it clandestinely and without risk. The imprecation which I am going to thunder out against you, I extend it to all the dishonest directors of hospitals, of whatsoever countries they may be, even of my own ; I extend it to all negligent ministers, from whom they shall

conceal the knowledge of their crimes, or who shall overlook them. May the ignominy, may the punishments reserved for the vilest malefactors, fall upon the proscribed head of villains, who are capable of so enormous a crime against humanity, and of a flagitious act so contrary to good policy; and if it should happen, that they should escape from infamy and from punishment, may the ministry, who have been ignorant of such an excess of corruption, or who have tolerated it, become an object of execration among all nations and in all ages.

Notwithstanding the confusion into which the houses of providence, so famous for the preservation of the human species, are fallen, there are still proportionally a less number of people who die at the cape than in any other of the maritime towns of the colony. This advantage must be attributed to the circumstance of the whole territory being cultivated, to the filling up of the neighbouring sloughs, to dissipation, to the conveniencies of life, to industry, and to succours of all kinds, which are found united in a numerous and active society. The air will acquire all the salubrity which the nature of things will allow, when the morasses of the little bay shall have been dried, which diffuse, in very dry seasons, an infectious odour.

The harbour is worthy of the town; and it is admirably well adapted to admit the ships that come from Europe, which may anchor here with convenience and safety, of whatever size they may be. It lies open to none but the north-east wind, and cannot even be hurt by this, the entrance being full of reefs, which break the violence of the waves.

It is into this famous staple that more than one half of the productions of the colony are conveyed. They are brought from the mountains and from the valleys, but principally from the plains. The parishes which furnish the most important of them are known by the names of the North plain, the Little bay, the Great river, the Morin, the Lemonade, the Terrier Rouge, Fort Dauphin, and Ouanaminthe, which terminates at the river Massacre. The district Morin, and the islet of Lemonade, are much superior to the other settlements, both in the quantity and quality of their sugars.

ALL the productions of St. Domingo amounted, in 1720, to no more than one million four hundred thousand weight of raw sugar, to one million four hundred thousand pounds of earthed sugar, and to one million two hundred thousand pounds of indigo. These productions have had a prodigious and rapid increase. Towards 1737, cotton and coffee were added to them. Even the culture of cacao hath been revived, though somewhat later.

Nature and quantity of the productions, which France annually receives from its colony of St. Domingo.

In 1775, France received from this colony, upon three hundred and fifty-three ships, one million two hundred and thirty thousand six hundred and seventy-three quintals seventy pounds of sugar, which were worth 44,738,139 livres 2 sols 2 deniers [about 1,864,089l. 2s. 7d.]; four hundred and fifty-nine thousand three hundred and thirty-nine quintals forty-one pounds of coffee, which were worth 21,818,621 livres 19 sols 6 deniers [909,109l. 4s. 11½d.]; eighteen thousand eighty quintals twenty-nine pounds of indigo, which were worth 15,373,346 livres 10 sols [640,556l. 2s. 1d.]; five thousand seven hundred eighty-seven quintals sixty-four pounds of cacao, which were worth 405,134 livres 16 sols [16,880l. 12s. 4d.]; five hundred and eighteen quintals sixty one pounds of arnotto, which were worth 32,663 livres 2 sols 6 deniers [1,360l. 19s. 3¾d.]; twenty-six thousand eight hundred and ninety-two quintals eighty-two pounds of cotton, which were worth 6,723,205 livres [280,133l. 10s. 10d.]; fourteen thousand one hundred and twenty-four hides, which were worth 164,657 livres [6,860l. 14s. 2d.]; forty-three quintals forty-six pounds of rope yarn, which were worth 43,460 livres [1,810l. 16s. 8d.]; ninety quintals nineteen pounds of black cassia, which were worth 2,435 livres 11 deniers [about 101l. 9s. 2¾d.]; ninety-two thousand seven hundred and forty-six quintals ninety-two pounds of wood, which were worth 908,368 livres 3 sols 8 deniers [about 37,848l. 13s. 5¾d.]; and in small productions, some of which belonged to the other colonies, 1,352,148 livres [56,339l. 10s.] and in money, 2,600,000 livres [108,333l. 6s. 8d.] The total of all these sums produces an income of 94,162,178 livres 16 sols 9 deniers [3,923,424l. 2s. 4¾d.]

If to the 94,162,178 livres 16 sols 9 deniers [3,923,424l. 2s. 4½d.] the produce of San Domingo, be added the 488,598 livres 3 sols 3 deniers [about 20,354l. 3s. 5½d.] produced by Cayenne; the 18,975,974 livres 1 sol 10 deniers [790,664l. 9s. 3d.] produced Martinico; and the 12,751,404 livres 16 sols 10 deniers [about 531,307l. 10s. 9d.] produced by Guadaloupe, it will be found, that in 1775, France received from her possessions in the New Hemisphere, upon five hundred and sixty-two ships 126,378,155 livres 18 sols 8 deniers [about 5,265,757l. 6s. 3½d.]

The kingdom consumed of these productions only to the amount of 52,763,763 livres 5 sols 8 deniers [about 2,199,740l. 1s. 8½d.] The remainder, which amounted to 73,584,392 livres 13 sols [3,066,016l. 17s. 2½d.] was consequently sold to foreigners.

This great exportation was formed by one million forty thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight quintals sixty-six pounds of sugar, which produced 38,703,463 livres [1,612,644l. 5s. 10d.]; by five hundred thousand five hundred and eighty-two quintals forty-six pounds of coffee, which produced 23,727,608 livres 13 sols [988,650l. 7s. 2½d.]; by eleven thousand three hundred and six quintals thirty-eight pounds of indigo, which produced 9,610,423 livres [400,434l. 5s. 10d.]; by seven thousand nine hundred and twenty-two quintals seventy-five pounds of cacao, which produced 554,592 livres 10 sols [23,108l. 5d.]; by fifteen hundred and thirty-one quintals seventy-eight pounds of arnotto, which produced 95,838 livres [3,993l. 5s. 10d.]; by one thousand and twenty quintals eleven pounds of cotton, which produced 255,027 livres 10 sols [10,626l. 2s. 11d.]; by twelve hundred and seven quintals fifty-nine pounds of black cassia, which produced 32,605 livres [1,358l. 18s. 10d.]; by forty-one thousand eight hundred and eight quintals twenty pounds of wood, which produced 598,723 livres [24,947l. 5s. 10d.]; by five hundred and sixty-eight hides, which produced 5,112 livres [213l.]; and by one hundred pounds weight of rope yarn, which produced 1,000 livres [41l. 13s. 4d.]

To return to St. Domingo, its astonishing wealth was produced by three hundred and eighty-five sugar houses for raw sugars, and two hundred and sixty-three for earthen sugars; by two thousand five hundred and eighty-seven

plantations of indigo; by fourteen millions eighteen thousand three hundred and thirty-six cotton plants; by ninety-two millions eight hundred and ninety-three thousand four hundred and five coffee trees; and by seven hundred and fifty-seven thousand six hundred and ninety-one cacao trees.

At the same period, the cattle of the colony amounted to seventy-five thousand nine hundred and fifty-eight horses or mules, and seventy-seven thousand nine hundred and four head of horned cattle. Its provisions consisted of seven million seven hundred and fifty-six thousand two hundred and twenty-five banana trees; one million one hundred and seventy-eight thousand two hundred and twenty-nine trenches of manioc; twelve thousand seven hundred and thirty-four plots of maize; eighteen thousand seven hundred and thirty-eight plots of potatoes; eleven thousand eight hundred and twenty-five plots of yams; and seven thousand forty-six plots of small millet.

The labours occupied thirty-two thousand and fifty white persons, of all ages, and of both sexes; six thousand and thirty-six negroes, or free mulattoes, and about three hundred thousand slaves. The annual calculation did not indeed reckon the number of these unfortunate captives at more than two hundred forty thousand and ninety-five; but it is well known, that at that time every planter concealed as many as he could from the researches of the treasury, in order to avoid the rigour of the imposts.

These cultures, and these inhabitants, are distributed over forty-six parishes, some of which are twenty leagues in circumference. The limits of a great number of them are not yet fixed, and most of them have nothing but huts or ruins for their churches. Divine service is scarce performed in any of them with proper decency. The churches of the south and of the western parts are under the direction of dominican friars, and those of the north under capuchins, who have succeeded the jesuits. They have all a large village or a town belonging to them.

The large villages are formed by the shops of some merchants, and by the manufactories of some artificers, all of them constructed round the presbytery. On festival days a kind of market is established, to which the slaves resort, in order to barter the fruits, the poultry, and other trifling

provisions which belong to them, for furniture, clothes, and ornaments, which, though of small value, procure them some kind of convenience, and distinguish them from their fellow creatures, who are not in possession of similar enjoyments. We cannot sufficiently express our indignation, that tyranny should still pursue them while they are employed in these trifling exchanges, and that the vile satellites of justice, intrusted with the regulation of the police of these assemblies, should make these unfortunate people sensible of the hardships of their situation, even during the short respite which is granted them by their barbarous masters.

Here we may perceive two very odious characters; the bailiff who torments the slave, and the director who doth not exercise his authority against the bailiff. But the bailiff is a man devoid of compassion, whose daily functions have perhaps hardened him to such a pitch, that he grows weary when the exercise of them is suspended, and when he has no opportunity of making any one suffer. The director, on the contrary, is a magistrate, whose breast doth not harbour the same degree of ferociousness, whose habitual business it is to display a kind of dignity, and in whom justice ought always to be tempered with compassion. How doth it happen, that two such different beings seem to concur in adding to the misfortune of the slaves? Is it owing to a barbarous contempt of these miserable people, who are almost expunged from the race of mankind? Or are they so completely doomed to grief and pain, that their cries and their tears shall not make any further impression?

The towns of the colony, and in general all those of the American islands, exhibit a picture very different from that which the European towns display. In Europe, our cities are peopled with men of every class, of all professions, and of all ages; some of them rich and idle, others poor and laborious; all of them pursuing, amidst the tumult and amidst the multitude, the object which they have in view; some following pleasure, others fortune; some reputation, or momentary fame, which is often mistaken for it, and others seeking their subsistence. In these great vortices, the collision and variety of passions, of interests, and of wants, necessarily produce great agitations, unexpected

contrasts, some virtues, and many vices or crimes. These are moving pictures, more or less animated in proportion to the number of actors, and consequently of scenes that are exhibited there. At St. Domingo, and in the rest of the American archipelago, the spectacle presented by the towns is uniform, and exactly the same. They have neither nobles, tradesmen, nor annuitants. They present nothing but magazines appropriated to the productions of the soil, and to the different labours they require. They have none but agents, inn-keepers, and adventurers, exerting themselves to obtain a post by which they may subsist, and accepting the first that offers. Every man is in haste to get rich, in order to quit a situation where there are no distinctions, no honours, no pleasures, to be found, and which supplies no other stimulus beside that of interest. No man resides there with an intention of living and dying upon the spot. The views of all men are fixed upon Europe; and the principal idea that tends to the increase of riches, consists in the expectation, more or less distant, of bringing them back into our hemisphere, among our own relations.

BESIDE the immense productions which the colony sends to the mother country, and which may at least be increased by one third, a small portion of them are delivered to its indolent neighbour. It is with sugar, rum, and especially with liquors and the manufactures of Europe, that the colony pays what the Spanish part of St. Domingo furnishes in pork and hung beef, in wood, hides, horses, and horned cattle, for its manufactures, and for its shambles; and that it appropriates to itself all the silver sent from the mines of Mexico to this ancient settlement. The court of Madrid have endeavoured to diminish the activity of this intercourse, by prohibiting the foreign merchandize from being brought into its possessions, and by loading the cattle which might be exported, with heavy duties. This faulty regulation hath had no other effect than to put a restraint upon those exchanges which ought to have continued perfectly free. It is particularly in this part of the world, that mutual wants prevail over natural

*Connections of
St. Domingo
with foreign
nations.*

antipathy, and that the uniformity of climate stifles this source of discord.

The Dutch of Curassou engross a great part of the trade of the French colony, during the wars in which they are not engaged; and they likewise carry off some commodities in peace time. It is with the productions of the East-Indies, and with bills of exchange, that they keep up this trifling intercourse.

The connections between the people of Jamaica and those of St. Domingo, are much more considerable. The twelve or thirteen thousand slaves which are annually carried to the colony by the French navigators, do not prevent its receiving four or five thousand from the English. The latter cost one sixth less than the other, and are paid with cotton, and especially with indigo, which is accepted at a higher price than is given by the national trade. These smugglers carry it into their own country, as a production of the British islands, and receive a gratification of twelve sols [6d.] per pound.

It is with North America, however, that St. Domingo keeps up a more regular and more useful intercourse. In times of urgent calamities, the vessels of that vast region of the New World are admitted in all the harbours, but at ordinary times only in the mole of St. Nicholas. In common times, their cargoes consist of wood for ship building, vegetables, cattle, flour, and salt fish. They carry off publicly five-and-twenty or thirty thousand hogsheads of molasses, and fraudulently, all the provisions which the colonists can deliver to them, or choose to do it.

The connections of France with St. Domingo become dangerous during times of war. Reason of this.

SUCH is, in time of peace, the division which is made of the territorial riches of St. Domingo. War opens a new scene. As soon as the signal for hostilities is given, the English take possession of all the latitudes about the colony. They restrain its exports and its imports. Every article, either entering or going out, falls into their hands; and the small quantity which might have escaped in the New Hemisphere, is intercepted upon the coasts of the Old, where the enemy are equally strong,

The merchants of the mother country are then obliged to postpone their expeditions, and the inhabitants of the island neglect their labours. Languor and despair succeed to important and rapid communications, and last as long as the divisions subsist between the belligerent powers.

This would have been otherwise, had the French, who first appeared at St. Domingo, thought of establishing cultures. They would have occupied, as they might have done, that part of the island which lies to the east. The plains on this side are spacious and fertile; and the coasts are safe; a ship enters the harbours upon the day they are discovered, and loses sight of them the very day it sails out. Such is the nature of the road, that the enemy cannot lay any ambuscade there. The coast is unfit for cruising. These latitudes are convenient for the Europeans, and the passage expeditious; but as the scheme of these adventurers was to attack the Spanish ships, and to infest the gulf of Mexico with their piracies, the possessions they occupied upon a winding coast, were surrounded by Cuba, Jamaica, the Turks, Tortuga, the Caicos, Gonava, and Lucayos islands. They are also surrounded by a multitude of sand-banks and rocks, which make the progress of a ship slow and uncertain; and by narrow seas, which must give a great advantage to the enemy, either for landing, for blocking up, or for cruising.

The court of Versailles will never be able to maintain a regular intercourse with its colony during time of war, unless by the means of some ships of the line to the south and the west, and a good squadron to the north. Nature hath formed, at Fort Dauphin, a vast, commodious, and safe harbour, which can be defended with facility. From this harbour, situated to the windward of the other settlements, it would be easy to protect the several latitudes; but the works of the place ought to be repaired and extended, and particularly a proper naval arsenal ought to be formed. If this were done, the French admirals, being secure of an asylum, and of all the necessary assistances, after either a successful or an unsuccessful engagement, would be no longer fearful of engaging the enemies of their country.

The part of St. Domingo occupied by the French, may be attacked by the Spaniards, who are in possession of the other part.

THE measures which would be proper to be taken to prevent the ravages which the Spaniards might commit in the inland part of St. Domingo, deserve likewise some attention.

Castile, which is still in possession of two thirds of the island, formerly had the whole of it, when, a little before the middle of the last century, a few bold and enterprising Frenchmen went there to seek a refuge from the laws, or from misery. The Spaniards endeavoured to repulse them; but, though without any other support than their courage, they were not afraid of sustaining war with a people armed under a regular authority. These men were acknowledged by their nation as soon as they were thought strong enough to maintain themselves in their usurpations. A commander was sent to them. The brave man, who was first appointed to command those intrepid adventurers, caught their spirit to such a degree, as to propose to his court the conquest of the whole island. He pledged his life for the success of the undertaking, provided they would send him a squadron strong enough to block up the harbour of the capital.

The ministry of Versailles, neglecting a project which was in reality more practicable than it appeared to them at a distance, left the French exposed to continual hostilities. Notwithstanding this, they always repulsed them successfully, and even carried devallation into the enemy's country; but those animosities kept up in their minds a spirit of robbery and plunder, indisposed them for useful labours, and stopped the progress of agriculture, which should be the ultimate end of every well regulated society.

The error which France had fallen into, in not seconding the ardour of the new colonists for the conquest of the whole island, had nearly occasioned her the loss of that part of which she was already in possession. While the French were engaged in carrying on the war of 1688 against all Europe, the Spaniards and the English, who both dreaded seeing them firmly established at St. Domingo, united their forces to expel them. Their first attempts gave them reason to expect an entire success; when they quarrelled with each other, and from that time became irreconcilable enemies. Duclasse, who managed the colony with much sagacity and

great reputation, took advantage of their divisions to attack them successively. He first invaded Jamaica, where he destroyed every thing with fire and sword. From thence he was preparing to turn his arms against St. Domingo; and would infallibly have reduced the whole island, had he not been stopped in this expedition by orders from his court.

The house of Bourbon ascended the throne of Spain, and the French nation lost all hopes of conquering St. Domingo. Hostilities, which had not even been suspended there by the treaties of Aix-la Chapelle, Nimeguen, and Ryswick, ceased at last between people who could never be true friends to each other. Those who had established cultures derived some advantage from this reconciliation. For some time past their slaves, availing themselves of the national divisions, had shaken off their chains, and removed into a district where they found freedom and no labour. This desertion was abated, by the Spaniards entering into a contract to bring home the fugitives to their neighbours, for the sum of 250 livres [10l. 8s. 4d.] a-head. Although this agreement was **not very** scrupulously observed, it proved a powerful check, till the dissensions that divided the two nations in 1718. At this period the negroes deserted their works in multitudes. This loss induced the French to think of reviving their old project of expelling totally from the island such neighbours, who were equally dangerous from their indolence, as others would be from their turbulent spirit. The war did not last long enough to bring about this revolution. At the conclusion of the peace, Philip V gave orders for the restitution of all the fugitives that could be found. They were just embarked, to be sent to their old masters, when the people rose and rescued them; an act which we could hardly disapprove, had they been prompted to it by humanity, rather than by national hatred. It will always be pleasing to see people excited to rebellion on account of the slavery of the negroes. Those who were rescued on this occasion, fled into inaccessible mountains, where they have since multiplied to such a degree, as to be able to afford a safe retreat to all the slaves that can find means to join them. There, in consequence of the cruelty of civilized nations, they become as free and as savage as tygers; in expectation, perhaps, of a chief and a conqueror, who may restore the violated rights of mankind, by seizing

upon an island which seems to have been intended for the slaves who till the ground, and not for the tyrants who waste it with the blood of those victims.

The present system of politics will not allow France and Spain to be at war with each other. Should any event occasion a rupture between the two nations, notwithstanding the compact between the two crowns, it would probably be but a transient quarrel, that would not allow time for projecting conquests which must soon be restored. The enterprises on both sides would, therefore, be confined to the ravaging of the country; and in this case the nation that does not cultivate, at least at St. Domingo, would prove formidable, by its very poverty, to that which has already made some progress in the culture of its lands. A Castilian governor was so sensible of this, that he once wrote to the French commandant, that, if he forced him to an invasion, he would destroy more in the compass of one league, than the French could, if they were to lay waste all the country he commanded.

Hence it is demonstrable, that, if a war should break out in Europe between these two powers, the most active of them ought to sue for a neutrality in favour of this island. It ought even, as it hath often been said, to solicit the absolute cession of a possession which is useless, or burthensome, to its possessor. We know not whether the court of Versailles have ever entertained this ambitious idea. But how much must we suppose that the Spanish ministry would have been averse from this cession, when they have stated so many difficulties respecting the fixing of the confused and uncertain limits of the two nations! This treaty, ardently desired, projected for a long time, and even begun at several intervals, hath been at length concluded in 1776.

Have the limits between France and Spain, been judiciously settled at St. Domingo?

THE only equitable and reasonable basis of these negociations, should have been the state of these possessions in 1700.

At this period both nations, being upon friendly terms, remained the just owners of the lands they then possessed. The encroachments made during the course of this century, by the subjects of

one of the crowns, are the encroachments of individuals upon each other; they are not become lawful possessors by being tolerated; and the rights of both powers are still the same, since they have not been abrogated, directly or indirectly, by any convention.

But it is certain, from incontestible facts, that in the beginning of this century, the French possessions, which are now bounded on the northern coast by the river of Massacre, extended then to the river Rebone. Those of the southern coast, which had been carried on as far as the river of Neybe, have been at present stopped at the inlet of Pitre. This surprising revolution is the natural consequence of the economical system of the two neighbouring nations. The one which has applied itself chiefly to agriculture, has collected all its possessions towards the most frequented ports, where the produce might be most certainly and advantageously disposed of. The other, whose subjects have always continued shepherds, took possession of all the lands that were abandoned, for the breeding of more cattle. The pastures have naturally been enlarged, and the fields contracted, or at least brought closer together.

A negotiation properly conducted, would have restored France to that situation in which it was when it gave a king to the Spaniards. This was the wish of equity and of reason; which were not desirous that active colonists, who render the land which they fertilize useful, should be sacrificed to a small number of vagabonds, who consume, without assisting in these productions. Nevertheless, from motives of policy, the springs of which are unknown to us, the court of Versailles have given up what they formerly possessed, and confined themselves to what they were in actual possession of, upon the borders of the sea, at the time of the convention. But hath this power at least regained in the inland parts what it hath sacrificed upon the coast? We are under the necessity of declaring, that it hath not received the smallest indemnity.

Before the treaty, the French colony formed a kind of crescent, the convexity of which produced, around the mountains, an extent of two hundred and fifty leagues of coast to the north, to the west, and to the south, of the island. The same arrangement subsists since the limits have

been settled; sooner or later it must be changed, for a reason which must prevail over all other considerations.

The French settlements, to the west and the south, are divided from those to the north by the Spanish territory. The impossibility of succouring each other, exposes them separately to the invasion of a power which is equally an enemy to both nations. Common interest will determine the court of Madrid to fix the limits in such a manner, that her ally may meet with the assistance that may be wanted for her defence. But this can never be, unless a line be drawn from the two fixed points upon the banks of the ocean, which shall determine the property of the two people. In vain would Spain perpetually grant to its neighbour the liberty of passing through its states, as it did in 1748, for a time; this complaisance would be of no use. That space, of fifteen or twenty leagues, is intersected with mountains so steep, forests so thick, ravins so deep, and rivers so irregular in their course, as to render it impracticable for an army to pass through it in its present situation. Immense labours would be requisite to render it useful, and those will never be executed, unless by orders of the crown to which the domain belongs. The court of Madrid will the more readily determine to cede this communication, so necessary to a nation whose interests are the same as their own, as the intermediate territory is of little value. It is rugged, not very fertile, and at a great distance from the sea. A few scattered flocks only are seen upon it. The proprietors of these uncultivated lands would be indemnified by France, with a generosity which would leave them no room to regret what they had lost.

Means which the French part of St. Domingo hath to protect itself from foreign invasions.

WHEN the possessions of the colony are thus connected and supported internally, by an uninterrupted chain of communication, the enemy will be more easily repulsed. If the English mean to attack St. Domingo by the west or south, they will collect their forces at Jamaica; if by the north, they will make their preparations at the Windward islands, and most probably at Antigua, which is the magazine of their naval stores.

The west and south are incapable of being defended. The immense extent of the tract renders it impossible to maintain any connection or regularity in the motion of the troops. If they should be dispersed, they would become useless by being thus divided; if they should be collected for the defence of such posts as are most liable to be attacked, from the natural weakness of their position, they would be in danger of being all lost together. Large battalions would only be burthensome to such extensive coasts, which present too much flank and too much front to the enemy. It will only be necessary to erect, or keep up, batteries to protect the roads, the merchant ships, and the coasting trade; to keep off privateers, and even to prevent the landing of a man of war or two, that might come to ravage the coast, and levy contributions. The light troops, which are sufficient to support these batteries, will give ground in proportion to the advances of the enemy, and only take care to avoid surrendering till they are in danger.

But it is not necessary to relinquish every kind of defence. At the back of each coast, there should be a place for shelter and for reinforcements; always open for retreat, out of the enemy's reach, safe from insults, and able to resist their attack. This should be a narrow pass, capable of being intrenched, and of defending the troops to advantage. From these impregnable retreats, the conqueror might continually be harassed; who, having no strong hold, will be perpetually exposed to a surprise, and will sooner or later be obliged to reimbark.

The northern coast, richer, more populous, and less extensive, than the other two, is more adapted to support a land war, and to make a regular defence.

The sea side, which is more or less full of reefs, affords in many places a swampy ground; and the mangroves which cover these marshes, make them quite impenetrable. This natural defence is not so common as it was, since many of these coppices have been cut away. But the landing places, which are commonly no better than gaps, flanked by these woods overflowed with water, require but a moderate front to stop them up. Magazines, and other stone buildings, are common there; they furnish posts for the erection of

battlements, and secure the placing of some masked batteries.

This first line of the shore seems to promise, that a coast of eighteen leagues, so well defended by nature, would, when seconded by the valour of the French, put the enemy in danger of being beaten the moment they should land. If their schemes were discovered, or if the dispositions they were making at sea should, from a distance, point out the place of their landing, the forces might repair thither and prevent it. But experience shews the infallible advantage of squadrons at anchor.

It is not only by the firing of broadsides from the ships to cover the approach of boats, it is by the impossibility there is of guarding every part of the coast, that a squadron at anchor can easily effect landing, as it is a constant check to so many places at once. Land forces move very slowly about the windings of the coast, while the boats and sloops arrive speedily by a shorter way. The assailant follows the string, while the other must go all along the bow. Disappointed and wearied out with a variety of motions, the latter is not less apprehensive of those he sees in the day-time, than of the manœuvres of the night which he cannot see.

In order to be able to oppose a descent, the first thing to be done is to suppose it actually accomplished; all our courage and strength is then exerted in taking advantage of the delays or mistakes of the enemy. As soon as they are observed at sea, they may immediately be expected on land. A large shore, on which a landing may be effected, will always leave the plain of the cape open to invasion; so that the chief attention must be directed, not to the sea shore, but to the inland parts.

The inland parts are in general covered with sugar canes, which being more or less high, according to their degree of maturity successively make the fields appear so many thickets. These are occasionally set on fire, either to cover a march, or to retard the enemy's pursuit, to deceive or astonish him. In two hours time, instead of fields covered with crops, nothing is to be seen but an immense waste, covered with stubble.

The partitions of the cane grounds, the savannahs, and the storehouses for provisions, do not obstruct the motions

of an army more than our meadows. Instead of our villages, they have their habitations, which are not so full of people, but are more numerous. The thick and straight hedges of citron trees are closer and more impenetrable than the fences that inclose our fields. This is what constitutes the greatest difference in the view of the fields of America and those of Europe.

A small number of rivers, some hollow ways, very low hillocks, a soil generally even, some dikes constructed against inundations, few ditches, if any, one or two forests, not very thick set with trees, a small number of morasses, a ground that is overflowed in a storm, and grows dusty again with twelve hours sunshine, rivers that are full one day, and dried up the next; these are the general appearances of the plain of the cape. This diversity must afford advantageous encampments, and it must ever be remembered, that in a defensive war, the post one removes to, cannot be too near the one that is quitted.

It is not the province of a writer to prescribe rules to military men. Cæsar himself has told us what he has done, not what we are to do. Topographical descriptions, determining the goodness of such or such a post, the combination of marches, the art of encampments and retreats, the most learned theory; all these must be submitted to the eye of the general, who, with the principles in his mind, and the materials in his hand, applies both to the circumstances of time and place, as they chance to occur. The military genius, though mathematical, is dependent on fortune, which suits the order of the operations to the diversity of appearances. Rules are liable to numberless exceptions, which must be discovered in the instant. The very execution almost always alters the plan, and discomposes the system of an action. The courage or timidity of the troops, the rashness of the enemy, the casual success of his measures, an accidental combat, an unforeseen event, a storm that swells a torrent, a high wind that conceals a snare or an ambuscade under clouds of dust, thunder that frightens the horses, or is confounded with the report of the cannon, the temperature of the air, which constantly influences the spirits of the commander and the blood of the soldiers: all these are so many natural or moral causes,

which, by their uncertainty, may overturn the best concerted projects.

Whatever place is made choice of for a descent at St. Domingo, the town of the cape will always be the object of it. The landing will be somewhere in the bay of the cape, where the ships will be ready to augment the land forces with two thirds of their crews, and to furnish them with artillery, ammunition, and whatever they may want for the siege of that opulent fortress. It is towards this bulwark of the colony that all endeavours to keep off the assailer must be directed. The choice of advantageous positions will, in some measure, compensate for the inequality of numbers. At the moment of landing, the ground must be disputed by supporting a kind of false attack, without engaging the whole of the troops. These must be posted in such a manner as to secure two retreats, the one towards the cape, to form the garrison of that place, the other in the narrow passes of the mountains, where they will keep an intrenched camp, from whence they may annoy the besiegers, and retard the taking of the place. Should the place surrender, as it would be an easy matter to favour the evasion of the troops when they evacuate it, the conquest would not yet be completed. The mountains in which they would take refuge, inaccessible to an army, surround the plain with a double or treble chain, and guard the inhabited parts, by very narrow passes, which may be easily defended. The principal of these is the defile of the great river, where the enemy would find two or three passes of the river, that reach from one mountain to the other. In this place four or five hundred men would stop the most numerous army, by only sinking the bed of the waters. This resistance might be seconded by 25,000 inhabitants, both white and black, who are settled in these valleys. As the white men are more numerous here than upon the richer lands, and their crops are smaller, they cannot afford to consume any great quantity of the produce of Europe, so that what they cultivate is chiefly for their own subsistence; from this they might easily supply the troops that should defend their country. Any deficiency in the article of fresh meat could be made up by the Spaniards, who breed vast quantities of cattle on the backs of these mountains.

After all, it may happen that the firmness of the troops may be sunk under the want of provisions or warlike stores, and they may be either forced or turned back. This suggested the idea some years ago at Versailles, of building a fortified town in the centre of the mountains. Marshal Noailles was a warm advocate for this scheme. It was then imagined, that by means of some redoubts of earth scattered upon different parts of the coast, the enemy might be enticed by regular attacks, and insensibly exhausted by the loss of a great number of men, in a climate where sickness suddenly proves more destructive than the sword. It was suggested that no more strong holds should be erected on the frontiers, where they lie exposed to the invasion of the masters of the sea; because, while they are unable to defend their own habitations, they become so many bulwarks for the conquerors, who can easily take and guard them with their ships, and depose or draw from thence arms and men to intimidate the vanquished. An entirely open country was better, in their opinion, for a power that has no maritime strength, than forces dispersed and forsaken upon shores, wasted and depopulated by the inclemency of the climate.

It was in the centre of the island that the strongest place of defence was expected to be made. A road of twenty or thirty leagues, full of obstacles, where every march must be attended with several engagements, in which the advantage of the posts would render a detachment formidable to a whole army; where the removing of the artillery would be tedious and laborious; where the difficulty of convoys, and the distance of communication with the ocean; where every thing, in short, would conspire to destroy the enemy: such was to be, as it were, the glacis of the intended fortification. This capital was to stand upon high ground, where the air is more pure and temperate than in the plains beneath; in the midst of a country which would supply the town with necessaries; surrounded with flocks and herds, which, feeding upon a soil most favourable to their increase, would be reserved for times of want; provided with storehouses proportioned to the town and garrison; such a city would have changed the colony into a kingdom, able to support itself for a long time; whereas its present opulence does but weaken it, and having superfluities without neces-

saries, it enriches a few proprietors, without affording them sustenance.

If the enemy had made themselves masters of the sea coast, which would not be disputed with them, and were desirous of collecting the produce of the lands, they would stand in need of whole armies to keep merely upon the defensive; for the continual excursions from the centre would not permit them to do more than this. The troops in the inland parts of the island, always sure of a respectable retreat, might easily be relieved by recruits from Europe, which would find no difficulty in penetrating to the centre of a circle of so immense a circumference; whereas all the English fleets would not be sufficient to fill up the vacancies which the climate would be continually making in their garrisons.

Notwithstanding the evidence of these advantages, the project of a fortification in the mountains has been dropt, and a system pursued, which would confine the whole defence of the island to the mole of St. Nicholas. This new plan could not fail of being applauded by the planters, who were not fond of citadels and garrisons near their plantations, as they are more injurious than they can possibly be beneficial to them. They are sensible, that the whole force being directed to one point, they should have none but light troops left in their neighbourhood, on the three coasts, which are sufficient to drive away the privateers by the assistance of their batteries; and are, besides, very convenient defenders, ever ready to yield without resistance, and to disperse or capitulate on the least intimation of an invasion.

This plan, so favourable to private interest, has also met with the approbation of some persons well versed in military affairs. They were of opinion, that the few troops which the colony will admit of, being in a manner lost in so large an island as St. Domingo, would make an appearance at the mole. Bombardopolis is the place that has been chosen, as the most respectable post. This new city stands on the margin of a plain, which is sufficiently elevated to render it cool and temperate. Its territory is covered with a natural savannah, and adorned with groves of palm trees of various kinds. It is not commanded; which is an uncommon circumstance at St. Domingo. It might be made a regu-

Tar fortification, and of any degree of strength. If it did not prevent an invasion, it would, at least, prevent the conquerors from getting a firm establishment upon the coasts.

• It were to be wished, says the partizans of this new system, that from the first moment the works had been begun at the mole, it had at the same time been fortified to the degree that so advantageous a situation would admit of. It is a treasure, the possession of which should have been secured as soon as it was discovered. Should this valuable key of St. Domingo, and, indeed, of all America, fall into the hands of the English, this Gibraltar of America would be more fatal to France and Spain than even that of Europe.

It is no wonder, if all the precautions which have been taken hitherto for the defence of St. Domingo, have been conducted with so little judgment. As long as forecast and protection shall be confined to secondary means, which can only protract, not prevent, the conquest of this island, no invariable plan can be pursued. Fixed principles are the exclusive privilege of such powers as can depend upon their naval force, to prevent the loss, or secure the recovery, of their colonies. Those of France have not hitherto been guarded by those floating arsenals, which can at the same time attack and defend; but this power hath at length been roused, and its navy is becoming formidable. But does she govern her possessions abroad by the maxims of sound policy and good order? This is what we shall next inquire into.

The British government, ever actuated by the national spirit, which seldom deviates from the true interests of the state, has carried into the New World that right of property which is the ground-work of her legislation. From a conviction, that man never thinks he has the entire possession of any thing but what he has lawfully acquired, they have, indeed, sold the lands in the islands, but at a very moderate price, to such as were willing to clear them. This hath appeared the surest way to hasten the cultivation of them; and to prevent partialities and jealousies, the necessary consequences of a distribution guided by caprice or favour.

Is the right of property well established in the French islands?

FRANCE has taken a method seemingly more generous, but not so prudent, that of granting lands to all who applied for them. In the infant state of these colonies, a vagabond went into the midst of the forests and marked out the space of greater or less extent, which he chose to occupy, and fixed its limits by cutting down trees all around it.

This confusion could not last long, and yet authority did not choose to strip those who had thus settled their own rights. It was ordained only, that for the future there should be no legitimate property but that which was granted by the administrators. Protection became then the only rule of the distributions, without any regard to talents or to means. Indeed it was stipulated, that they should begin their settlements within a year after the grant, and not discontinue the clearing of the ground, upon pain of forfeiture. But, beside the hardship of requiring those men to be at the expence of clearing the land, who could not afford to purchase, the penalty fell upon those only, who, not having the advantage of family and fortune, could not make interest with the great; or upon minors, who being left destitute by the death of their parents, ought rather to have been assisted by the public; whereas every proprietor who was well recommended or supported, was not called to account, though he let his grounds lie fallow.

To this partiality, which evidently retarded the progress of the colonies, we may add a number of ill-judged regulations relative to cultivation. First, it was required of every person who obtained a grant of land, to plant 500 trenches of manioc for every slave he had upon his plantation. This order was equally detrimental both to private and public interest, as it compelled the planter to encumber his ground with this ordinary production, when it was able to yield richer crops; and rendered the poor grounds, which were only fit for this kind of culture, useless. This double error could not but lessen the growth of all kinds of commodities; and indeed, this law, which laid a restraint upon the disposal of property, has never been strictly put in execution; but as it has also never been repealed, it still remains a scourge in the hand of an ignorant, capricious, or violent, minister, who may choose to make use of it against the in-

habitants. This evil, great as it is, is, however, the least of those they have to complain of from administration. The restraint of the agrarian law is still increased by the burthen of labours imposed upon the vassals.

There was a time in Europe, that of the feudal government, when gold and silver were little regarded in public or private transactions. The nobles served the state, not with their purses, but with their persons; and those of their vassals, who were their property by right of conquest, paid them a kind of quit-rent or homage, either in the fruits of the earth, or in so much labour. These customs, so destructive to men and lands, tended to perpetuate that barbarity to which they owed their rise. But at length they were gradually laid aside, as the authority of kings prevailed in overthrowing the independence and tyranny of the great, by restoring freedom to the people. The prince, now become the sole master, abolished, as a magistrate, some abuses arising from the right of war, which destroys every other right. But several of these usurpations, which time had consecrated, were still retained. That of the average, or a certain proportion of labour required of the vassals, has been kept up in some states, where the nobles have lost almost every advantage, though the people have not acquired any. The liberty of France is at this day infringed by this public bondage; and this injustice has been reduced into a system, as if to give it a colour of justice.

Who would imagine that in the most enlightened age of the nation, at a time when the rights of man have been most rigidly discussed, when the principles of natural morality have no longer been contradicted, under the reign of a beneficent king, under humane ministers, and under upright magistrates; who would imagine, that it should have been pretended to be consistent with the order of justice and agreeable to the constitution of the state, that a set of unhappy people who have no property should be dragged from their huts, taken from their repose, or from their labours, they, their wives, their children, and their cattle, in order to go and exhaust themselves after long fatigues in labours of a new kind; in the construction of roads more pompous than they are useful, for the benefit of those who possess every thing, and this without pay and without food?

O men! whose hearts are of steel, go one step further, and you will soon persuade yourselves that you are allowed!—But here, let me hold: indignation would carry me too far. It is, however, proper to warn government, that the dreadful system of vassalage is still more fatal to the colonies.

The culture of these lands, from the nature of the climate and of the productions, requiring expedition, cannot easily spare a number of hands to be sent to a great distance, and employed in public works, which are often useless, and should never be carried on but by idle persons. If the mother country, with all the various means she can employ, has never yet been able to correct or mitigate the hardships of vassalage, she ought to consider what evils must result from them beyond the seas, where the direction of these works is committed to two overseers, who can neither be directed, censured, nor controlled, in the arbitrary exercise of absolute power. But the burthen of these services is light, when compared with that of the taxes.

Are the taxes properly levied in the French islands?

A TAX may be defined to be a contribution towards public expence, necessary for the preservation of private property. The peaceable enjoyment of lands and revenues requires a proper force to defend them from invasion, and a police that secures the liberty of cultivating them. Whatever is paid towards the maintenance of public order, is right and just; whatever is levied beyond this, is extortion. Now, all the government expences which the mother country is at for the colonies, are repaid her by the restraint laid upon them, to cultivate for her alone, and in such a manner as is best adapted to her wants. This subjection is the most burthenfome of all tributes, and ought to exempt them from all other taxes.

Any one must be convinced of this truth, who reflects on the difference of situation between the Old World and the New. In Europe, subsistence and home consumption are the principal object of culture and of manufactures; exportation only carries off the overplus. In the islands, the whole is to be exported. There life and property are equally precarious.

In Europe, war only deprives the manufacturer and the husbandman of the trade to foreign countries; they still have their resource in that which circulates in the internal part of the kingdom. In the islands, hostilities annihilate every thing; there are no more sales, no more purchases, no more circulation; the planter hardly recovers his costs.

In Europe, the owner of a small estate, who is able to make only a few expences, improves his land as much in proportion as he who hath a wide domain and immense treasures. In the islands, the improvement of the smallest plantation requires a tolerable stock to begin with.

In Europe, it is commonly one citizen that is indebted to another; and the state is not impoverished by these private debts. Those of the islands are of a different nature. Many planters, in order to carry on the labour of clearing their grounds, and to repair the losses incurred by the misfortunes of war, which had put a stop to their exports, have been obliged to borrow such large sums, that they may be considered rather as farming the trade, than as proprietors of the plantations.

Whether these reflections have not occurred to the French ministry, or whether particular circumstances have obliged them to depart from their plan; certain it is, they have added fresh taxes to the obligation already laid on the colonies to draw all their necessaries from France, and to send thither all their own commodities. Every negro has been taxed. In some settlements, this poll-tax had been confined to the working blacks; in others, it was laid on all the slaves without distinction. Both these arrangements have been opposed by the colony assembled at St. Domingo. Let us now judge of the force of their arguments.

Children, old and infirm men, make up about one third of the slaves. Far from being useful to the planter, some of them are only a burthen, which humanity alone can prompt him to support, while the rest can afford him but distant and uncertain hopes. It is difficult to conceive how the treasury should have thought of taxing an object that is already chargeable to the owner.

The poll-tax upon blacks extends beyond the grave; that is to say, it is fixed upon a person who exists no more. If a slave should die after the assessment has been made, the planter, who is already unhappy on account of the diminution in his income and of his capital, is still obliged to pay a tax, which reminds him of his losses, and makes him feel them more sensibly.

Even the working slaves are not an exact tariff of the appraisement of a planter's income. With a few negroes, a good soil will yield more than a poor one with a great number. The commodities are not all of the same value, though they are all procured by the labour of those persons upon whom the tax is equally laid. The changing from one kind of culture to another, which the ground requires, suspends for a while the produce of labour. Droughts, inundations, fires, devouring insects, often destroy the fruits of labour. Suppose all things alike, a less number of hands makes in proportion a less quantity of sugar; either because the whole of the wants must be taken into consideration, or because labour is truly advantageous so far only as the most favourable opportunities can be improved.

The poll-tax upon blacks becomes still more oppressive in time of war. A planter who cannot then dispose of his commodities, and must run in debt to support himself and to keep up his land, is further obliged to pay a tax for slaves, whose labour will hardly be equivalent to their maintenance. Nay, he is often constrained to send them at a distance from his plantation for the imaginary wants of the colony, to support them there at his own expence, and to see them perish without any reason, while he is under the severe necessity of replacing them one time or other, if ever he means to retrieve his wasted and almost ruined lands.

The burthen of the poll-tax was still heavier upon such of the proprietors as were absent from the colony, for these were condemned to pay the tax treble; which was the more unjust, as it was matter of indifference to France whether her commodities were consumed at home or in the islands. Could it be her intention to hinder the emigration of the colonists? But it is only by the mildness of the government that citizens can be induced to fix in a country,

not by prohibitions and penalties. Besides, men who by hazardous labours carried on in a sultry climate, had contributed to the public prosperity, ought to have been indulged in the liberty of ending their days in the temperate regions of the mother country. Nothing could more effectually rouse the ambition and activity of numbers of idle people, than to be spectators of their fortune; and the state might thus be relieved of the load of these useless men, to the profit of industry and commerce.

Nothing can be more detrimental to both than this taxing of the blacks, as the necessity of selling obliges the planter to lower the price of his commodities. A moderate price may be an advantageous circumstance, when it is the result of great plenty, and of a very quick circulation. But it is ruinous to be obliged to lose constantly upon one's merchandize, in order to pay taxes. Finance is like a foul ulcer, in which the mortified flesh destroys the live flesh. In proportion as the blood is conveyed into the wound by the circulation, it becomes corrupted there while it supplies it. The profits of trade are all absorbed by the treasury, which is continually receiving, without making any returns.

Lastly, it is a very difficult matter to levy this tax. Every proprietor must give in an annual account of the number of his slaves. To prevent false entries, they must be verified by clerks or excisemen. Every negro that is not entered must be forfeited; which is a very absurd practice, because every labouring negro is so much stock, and by the forfeiture of him the culture is diminished, and the very object for which the duty was laid is annihilated. Thus it happens, that in the colonies, where the success of every thing depends upon the tranquillity which is enjoyed, a destructive war is carried on between the financier and the planter. Law-suits are numerous, removals frequent, rigorous measures become necessary, and the costs are great and ruinous.

If the negro tax be unjust in its extent, unequal in its repartition, and complicate in the mode of levying it, the tax laid upon the commodities that are carried out of the colonies is nearly as injudicious. The government have ventured to impose this duty, from a persuasion that it would fall entirely upon the consumer and the merchant;

but there cannot be a more dangerous error in political economy than this is.

The act of consuming does not supply money to buy what is consumed; this must be gained by labour; and all labour, if things are traced up to their origin, is, in fact, paid by the first proprietor out of the produce of the earth. This being the case, no one article can be always growing dearer, but all the rest must rise in proportion. In this situation, there is no profit to be made upon any of them. If this equilibrium between the articles of commerce be removed, the consumption of the advanced article will decrease; and, if it decrease, the price will fall of course, and the dearth will have been only transient.

The merchant can no more take the duty upon him than the consumer. He may, indeed, advance it once or twice; but if he cannot make a natural and necessary profit upon the commodities so taxed, he will soon discontinue that branch of trade. To hope that competition will force him to take the payment of the duty out of his profits, is to suppose that they were exorbitant; and that the competition, which was then insufficient, will become more considerable when the profits are less. If, on the other hand, things were as they ought to be, and the profits no more than necessary, it is supposing that the competition will subsist, though the profits that gave rise to it subsist no longer. We must admit all these absurdities, or allow that it is the planter in the islands who pays the duty, whether it be levied from the first, second, or hundredth, hand.

Far from thus burthening the cultivation of the colonies with taxes, it ought to be encouraged by liberalities; since by the state of restraint in which trade is kept, these liberalities, with all the advantages arising from them, must necessarily return to the mother country.

If the situation of a state, that is in arrears on account of losses or mismanagement, will not admit of liberalities, or easing the subjects of their burthens, the payment of the taxes in the colonies themselves might, at least, be suppressed, and the produce of them levied at home. This would be the next best system that could be pursued, and would be equally agreeable to the Old and New World.

Nothing is so pleasant to an American, as to remove from his sight every thing that denotes his dependence. Wearied with the importunities of collectors, he abhors standing taxes, and dreads the increase of them. He in vain seeks for that liberty which he thought to have found at the distance of two thousand leagues from Europe. He disdains a yoke which pursues him across the storms of the ocean. Discontented, and inwardly repining at the restraint he still feels, he thinks with indignation on his native country; which, under the name of mother, calls for his blood, instead of feeding him. Remove the image of his chains from his sight; let his riches pay their tribute to the mother country only at landing there, and he will fancy himself free and privileged; though at the same time, by lowering the value of his own commodities, and enhancing the price of those that come from Europe, he, in fact, ultimately bears the load of a tax of which he is ignorant.

Navigators will also find an advantage in paying duties only upon goods that have reached the place of their destination in their full value, and without any risk, and will restore the capital of their stock along with the profits. They will not then have the mortification of having purchased of the prince the very hazards of shipwreck, and of losing a cargo for which they had paid duty at embarking. Their ships, on the contrary, will bring back, in merchandise, the amount of the duty; and the productions being advanced in value by exportation, the duty will hardly be felt.

Lastly, the consumer himself will be a gainer by it; because the colonist and the merchant cannot benefit by any regulation, of which in time the consumer will not experience the good effects. All the taxes will no sooner be reduced to a single one, but trade will be clogged with fewer formalities, fewer delays, fewer charges, and consequently the commodities can be sold at a more reasonable rate.

This system of moderation, which every thing seems to point out as the fittest, will be easily introduced. All the productions of the islands are subject, at their entry into the kingdom, to a duty known by the name of *Domaine d'occident*, or Western domain, which is fixed at three and

a half per cent. with eight fols [4d.] per pound. The value of these productions, which is the rule for the payment of the duty, is determined in the months of January and July. It is fixed at twenty, or five-and-twenty, per cent. below the real price. The western office allows, besides, a more considerable tare than the seller in trade does. Add to this duty that which the commodities pay at the custom-houses of the colonies, which produces nearly the same, and those that are paid in the inland parts of the islands; and we shall have the whole of the revenue which the government draws from the settlements in America.

If this fund were confounded with the other revenues of the state, we might be apprehensive that it was not applied to its destination, which should be solely the protection of the islands. The unforeseen exigencies of the royal treasury would infallibly divert it into another channel. There are some moments when the critical state of the disease will not admit of calculating the inconveniencies of the remedy. The most urgent necessity engrosses all the attention. Nothing then is secured from the hand of arbitrary power, urged by the wants of the present moment. The ministry is continually drawing out of the treasury, under the delusive hopes of replacing in a short time what they have received; but the execution of this design is perpetually retarded by fresh demands.

Hence it appears, that it would be highly necessary that the treasury, destined for the duties on the productions of the colonies, should be kept wholly separate from that destined to receive the revenues of the kingdom. The sums deposited there, as in trust, would always be ready to answer the demands of those settlements. The colonist who always has stock to send over to Europe, would gladly give it for bills of exchange, when he was once assured that they would meet with no delays or difficulties in the payment of them. This kind of bank would soon create another means of communication between the mother country and the islands; the court would be better acquainted with the state of their affairs in these distant countries, and would recover the credit they have long since lost; but which is of the utmost consequence, especially in time of war. We shall now put an end to our discussions on taxes, and consider the regulations respecting the militia.

THE French islands, like those of other nations, had no regular troops at first. The adventurers, who had conquered them, looked upon the right of defending themselves as a privilege; and the descendants of those intrepid men thought themselves sufficiently strong to guard their own possessions. They had nothing, indeed, to do but to repulse a few vessels, which landed some sailors and soldiers, as undisciplined as themselves.

The situation of affairs has, indeed, undergone an alteration. As these settlements became more considerable, it was to be expected that they would sooner or later be attacked by numerous European fleets and armies; and this made it necessary to send them other defenders. The event has shewn the insufficiency of a few scattered battalions, to oppose the land and sea forces of England. The colonists themselves have been convinced that their own efforts could never prevent a revolution; and fearing that a fruitless resistance would exasperate a victorious enemy, they were more inclined to capitulate than to fight. Having become political calculators, their weakness made them sensible that they were unfit for military operations, and they have contributed their money in order to be discharged from a service, which, though glorious in its principle, had degenerated into a burthen some servitude. The militia was suppressed in 1763.

This act of compliance has been applauded by those who only considered this institution as the means of preserving the colonies from all foreign invasions. They very sensibly imagined, that it was unreasonable to require that men, who were grown old under the hardships of a scorching climate, in order to raise a large fortune, should expose themselves to the same dangers as those poor victims of our ambition, who are perpetually hazarding their lives for a pay which is not sufficient for their subsistence. Such a sacrifice hath appeared to them too unreasonable to expect it should be complied with; and the ministry, who saw the impropriety of keeping up such a vain and burthen some service, have therefore discontinued it, and been commended.

Those who are better acquainted with the American settlements, have not judged so favourably of this innovation,

The militia, say they, is necessary to preserve the interior police of the islands ; to prevent the revolt of the slaves ; to check the incursions of the fugitive negroes ; to hinder the banditti from assembling in troops ; to protect the navigation along the coasts, and to keep off the privateers. If the inhabitants be not embodied ; if they have neither commanders nor standards, how can they avert so many dangers ? How will it be possible to dissipate these destructive calamities, when they have not been able to check them before they broke out ? From whence will arise that harmony and uniformity of action, without which nothing can be carried on with propriety ?

These reflections, which, though striking and natural, had at first escaped the court of Versailles, soon produced an alteration in their conduct. They became convinced of the necessity of restoring the militia, but without giving up the taxes which were agreed to for the support of the regular troops. It was a difficult matter to dispose the people to consent to this arrangement. The ministry negotiated, bribed, and threatened. Guadaloupe and Martinico, though displeased with the abuses committed by an inconstant and precipitate authority, submitted at length, in 1767, to the wishes of administration ; but this example did not make the impression upon St. Domingo that was desired, and perhaps expected. The year following it became necessary to carry on a war against this rich colony, and it was not till after the magistrates of the west and south of the island had been thrown into prison, and till the earth was strewed with dead bodies, that it was possible to reduce to submission the planters, exasperated by the vexations of a rapacious government.

Since this period, unfortunately stamped with characters of blood, all the inhabitants of the other hemisphere are again embodied. The obligations that are imposed by this kind of reglittering are various, and are not yet properly explained. This obscurity, which is always dangerous in the hands of rulers, who are perpetually intent upon the extending of their jurisdiction, keeps the citizens in continual alarms for their liberty, which they are more jealous of in the colonies than we are in Europe ; it exposes them to numberless vexations. The evils it has occasioned have excited a detestation for this kind of servitude, which none

but tyrants or slaves can be surpris'd at. It is necessary, if possible, to eradicate the impressions of the past, and remove all mistrust for the future. The legislature will succeed in this by making all those alterations in the form of the militia, which are consistent with its object ; which is, to maintain public order and safety. The welfare of the people is the great end of all authority. If the actions of the sovereign do not tend to this end, his existence will be supported only by the assistance of money, or the sanction of old records, which time will destroy or posterity despise. In vain does flattery raise numberless and magnificent monuments to princes ; the hand of man erects them, but it is the heart that consecrates them, and affection that renders them immortal. Without this, public trophies are only a proof of the meanness of the people, not of the greatness of the ruler. There is one statue in Paris, the sight of which makes every heart exult with sentiments of affection. Every eye is turned with complacency towards this image of paternal and popular goodness. The tears of the distressed silently call upon it under the hardships of oppression. Men secretly bless the hero it immortalizes. All voices unite to celebrate his memory after two centuries are elapsed. His name is in veneration to the uttermost parts of America. In every heart he protests against the abuses of authority ; he declares against the usurpations of the rights of the people ; he promises the subjects the redress of their grievances, and an increase of prosperity ; and demands both of the ministry.

AMONG the circumstances which require reformation, we ought to reckon a custom established in the French possessions in the New World, of dividing equally the paternal inheritance among all the children, and the inheritance of a relation among all the co-heirs.

Is the regulation of inheritance properly settled in the French islands ?

We hold in abhorrence, with all reasonable men, whom pride or prejudice have not corrupted, the absurd right of primogeniture, which transfers the entire patrimony of a family to the eldest son, whose morals are corrupted by it ; which reduces his brothers and sisters to a state of indigence, and punishes them, as it were, for the casual fault of hav-

ing been born a few years too late. Are they the less legitimate on that account? and is the person who hath given them existence the less responsible for their happiness? A chief of a family is nothing more than a depositary; and is a depositary ever allowed to make an unequal division of his trust between persons who have an equal claim? If a savage should be in possession, at his death, of two bows, and should have two children; and if he should be asked, what was to be done with the two bows, would he not answer, that one should be given to each of his children? And if he were to bequeath them both to one, would it not be understood that he had considered the excluded child as not being his own offspring? In the countries where this monstrous custom of disinheriting is authorised, the father is the least respected by all; by the eldest, because he can take nothing away from him; and by the youngest children, because he can give them nothing. To filial affection, which is extinguished, succeeds a meanness of sentiment, which accustoms three or four children, almost as soon as they are born, to cringe to one alone, who from this circumstance conceives a degree of personal importance, which seldom fails to render him insolent. Respectable parents are apprehensive of multiplying around them a number of indigent persons who are to be condemned to celibacy. The whole inheritance is placed in the hands of a madman, whose dissipations can only be put a stop to by substitution, which is another evil. Calamities of so great magnitude must necessarily suggest the idea, that the right of primogeniture, which was not originally consecrated by superstition, and which despotism hath no interest in perpetuating, will, sooner or later, be abolished. It is the remains of feudal barbarism, which our descendants will one day be ashamed of.

The law of equality, however, which seems dictated by nature; which occurs instantly to every just and good man; which leaves no doubt in the mind as to its rectitude and utility; this law may sometimes, perhaps, be prejudicial to the preservation of society. We have an instance of this in the French islands, which it diverts from the end of their destination, and gradually paves the way for their ruin.

This division was necessary at the first formation of colonies. Immense tracts of lands were to be cleared. This

could not be done without people ; nor could men, who had quitted their own country for want, be any otherwise fixed in those distant and desert regions, than by assigning them a property. Had the government refused to grant them lands, they would have wandered about from one place to another ; they would have begun to establish various settlements, and have had the disappointment to find, that none of them would attain to that degree of prosperity as to become useful to the mother country.

But since inheritances, too extensive at first, have in process of time been reduced by a series of successions, and by the subdivisions of shares, to such a compass as renders them fit to facilitate cultivation ; since they have been so limited as not to lie fallow for want of hands, proportionable to their extent, a further division of lands would again reduce them to nothing. In Europe, an obscure man, how has but a few acres of land, will make that little estate more advantageous to him in proportion, than an opulent man will the immense property he is possessed of, either by inheritance or chance. In America, the nature of the productions, which are very valuable ; the uncertainty of the crops, which are but few in their kind ; the quantity of slaves, of cattle, of utensils necessary for a plantation ; all this requires a large stock, which they have not in some, and will soon want in all, the colonies, if the lands be parcelled out and divided more and more by hereditary successions.

If a father leave an estate of 30,000 livres [1,250*l.*] a-year, and this estate be equally divided between three children, they will all be ruined if they make three distinct plantations ; the one, because he has been made to pay too much for the buildings, and because he has too few negroes, and too little land in proportion ; the other two, because they must build before they can begin upon the culture of their land. They will all be equally ruined, if the whole plantation should remain in the hands of one of the three. In a country where a creditor is in a worse state than any other man, estates have risen to an immoderate value. The possessor of the whole will be very fortunate if he is obliged to pay no more for interest than the net produce of the plantation. Now, as the primary law of nature is the procuring of subsistence, he will begin with

procuring that without paying his debts. These will accumulate, and he will soon become insolvent, and the confusion consequent upon such a situation will end in the ruin of the whole family.

The only way to remedy these disorders, is to abolish the equality of the division of land. In this enlightened age, government should see the necessity of letting the colonies be more stocked with things than with men. The wisdom of the legislature will, doubtless, find out some compensation for those it has injured, and in some measure sacrificed to the welfare of the community. They ought to be placed upon fresh lands, and to subsist by their own labour. This is the only way to maintain this sort of men; and their industry would open a fresh source of wealth to the state.

At the conclusion of the peace, a favourable opportunity offered itself for making the proposed alteration in St. Lucia and Guiana. The French ought not to have neglected this opportunity, perhaps the only one that will offer, to repeal the law relating to the divisions of estates, by distributing to those, whose expectations they had frustrated, such lands as they intended to cultivate; and by giving them those considerable sums that have been expended to no purpose, as the necessary advance for carrying on the cultivation. Men inured to the climate, acquainted with the only kind of culture that could possibly be thought of, encouraged by the example, assistance, and advice, of their own families, and aided by the slaves with which government would have supplied them, were much fitter for this purpose than a set of profligate men, collected from the refuse of Europe, and were not much more likely to raise new colonies to that pitch of wealth and prosperity which might be expected. Unfortunately, it was not foreseen, that the first colonies in America must have increased by slow degrees and of themselves, with the loss of a great many men, or by extraordinary exertions of bravery and patience, because they had no competition to support; but that the succeeding settlements could only be formed by the natural means of population, as an old swarm begets a new one. The overflowings of population in one island must spread into another; and the superfluities of a rich colony furnish necessaries to an infant settlement. This is the na-

tural order which good policy points out to maritime and commercial powers. All other methods are irrational and destructive. Though the court of Versailles have overlooked this plain principle, productive of so much good, this is no reason why they should reject the proposal of putting a stop to the further division of lands. If the necessity of such a law be evident, it must be enacted, though the present time be less favourable than that which has been neglected. When the plantations are restored to their state of prosperity, by the suppression of that division of land, which precludes every means of improvement, the planters may then be compelled to clear themselves of the debts with which their plantations are now oppressed.

PART of these debts originated from the claims that were allowed, by an injudicious law, to the several co-heirs. This distressed situation hath increased in proportion as the colonies have acquired more wealth. When they had increased so far, as that the number of inhabitants became superior to the plantations, the superabundant part of the population remained idle creditors of the lands they did not occupy, and consequently useless, and even burthensome, to the culture.

Has the payment of the debts contracted by the French islands been wisely provided for?

There are other credits proceeding from the sale which the colonists have reciprocally made of their habitations. We seldom go to America, without the prospect of enjoying in Europe those riches, which are commonly acquired by obstinate labour, or by fortunate events. Those who do not lose sight of this aim, live with more or less economy, and send to their own country all that they have been able to save out of their income. As soon as they have acquired that degree of fortune to which they aspired, they endeavour to dispose of their plantations. In a country where the specie is deficient, it is necessary to sell them upon credit, or to keep them; and most of the proprietors rather choose to give up their possessions to purchasers who sometimes fail in their engagements, than to trust them in the hands of stewards who are seldom faithful.

Lastly, the advances made to the colonists have been the occasion of much credit being given. The lands of the

French islands, as well as of the other islands in America, did not originally yield any production fit for exportation. Funds were necessary to clear them, and the first Europeans who occupied them had no property. Trade came to their assistance; it furnished them with utensils, provisions, and slaves, necessary to form productions. This association between monied and industrious people gave birth to a great number of debts, which have multiplied in proportion as the plantations have increased.

The debtors have but too often failed in fulfilling the obligations they had contracted. An inordinate luxury, which cannot be excused in men who are born in misery, hath compelled several of them to this breach of faith. Others have been drawn into it by an indolence, inconceivable in eager minds, that had gone beyond the seas to seek an end to their indigence. The most abundant means have been lost in the hands of some people, who were destitute of the skill necessary to improve them. There have been likewise some planters devoid of shame, and without principle, who, though capable of settling with their creditors, have daringly withheld the property of others. Other causes have likewise occurred in lessening the force of engagements.

Hurricanes, the violence of which cannot be easily described, subverted the country and destroyed the crops. The most expensive and the most necessary buildings have been swallowed up by earthquakes. Insects, which could not be destroyed, have devoured, during a long series of years, all the produce that might have been expected from a fertile and well-cultivated soil. Some commodities, the produce of which hath exceeded their consumption, have lost their value, and have fallen into the utmost contempt. Long and cruel wars, by opposing insurmountable obstacles to the exportation of the productions, have rendered useless the most constant and most obstinate labours.

These calamities which have sometimes happened at the same time, or which have at least succeeded each other too rapidly, have given rise to a system of jurisprudence favourable to the debtors. The legislature have encumbered the seizure of lands and slaves with so many formalities, that it should seem as if their design had been to render it impracticable. The public opinion hath branded the small num-

ber of creditors who have undertaken to overcome these difficulties ; and the tribunals themselves did not accede, without extreme reluctance, to the rigorous measures they were desirous of pursuing.

This system, which hath appeared for a long time the best that could be followed, hath still its partisans. What is it to the state, say these political calculators, whether the riches be in the hands of the creditor or of the debtor, provided public prosperity be increased ? But can public prosperity increase when justice is trampled upon ; when administration encourages a breach of faith, by offering it an asylum under the protection of the laws, for if the laws do not prosecute they protect ; when the seeds of mistrust are encouraged among citizens, which must in time render them so many rogues, and enemies to each other ; when loans, without any kind of security, shall have become impossible, or ruinous ; when the rapaciousness of usury shall be exercised without restraint ; when credit shall no longer exist either in or out of the state ; and when the whole nation shall be considered as a set of men devoid of principles and of morality. General felicity can have no solid foundation, without the validity of engagements from whence it arises. Even the government ought only to free itself from its incumbrances according to the rules of justice. A bankruptcy of the state is infamous, and still more prejudicial to the morality of society than to the fortunes of individuals. A time will come, when all these iniquities shall be summoned to the tribunal of nations, and when the power which hath committed them shall be judged by its victims.

Other speculators, not so loose in their principles, have asserted, that an enlightened legislation would annul the debts anterior to a period which ought to be fixed. We will not examine whether this practice of some ancient republics hath ever been salutary ; but we will affirm, without any fear of mistaking, that such a breach of the public faith, if it were common, would again plunge Europe, now become commercial, into that state of inaction and misery in which it was three or four centuries ago. Fortunately, this destructive revolution is not to be apprehended. The respect for property increases daily even among the least enlightened nations. In process of time, it will

be established in the French islands, as well as elsewhere, when government shall at length compel the colonists to give some kind of satisfaction to their creditors. The best method of bringing about this act of justice is not yet agreed upon.

Some persons are desirous of sumptuary laws, which, by restraining the expences of the inhabitants, would enable them to fulfil their engagements. How could such an idea ever enter into the minds of men, to establish this system of privation as a maxim in the colonies? The value of their productions being entirely owing to exchanges, would not the annihilation of these compel the Americans either to raise few commodities, or to sell them for a trifle? Should the mother country be willing to make up in money the deficiencies in the sale of their merchandize, then all the gold that is drawn from one part of America would return into the other. After fifteen or twenty years of such a trade, the powers that are enemies to France would have an additional motive for attacking possessions, the fertility of which excites in them so much surprise and jealousy.

Others have imagined, that all kind of credit should henceforward be prohibited. But would not the cultures already established suffer from so absurd a system? Would not the cultivation of the virgin lands, which are generally most productive, be impeded? Would not the operations of the merchants in the mother country become daily more languid?

It is well known how reluctantly they see the rich planter accustom himself to send his own productions to Europe, to draw the articles of his own consumption from thence, and reduce his correspondents to the bare profits of commission. If that dependence, which is a necessary consequence of debts, should cease, they would no longer be a few planters, but the whole colony, who would make their own purchases and sales in the mother country; they would all become traders, and even would soon have no competitors, because they alone would be acquainted with the measure of their own wants.

Several persons have wished that it should be permitted to seize and to sell the negroes of debtors. Then the slaves who should cease to work upon one plantation, would be

employed upon another, and the colony would not be injured. This is a mistake ; the negroes will never be made to pass, without mischief, from one plantation to another. These men, already too unhappy, would not contract the fresh habits required by a change of place, of master, of method, and of employment. They cannot live without their mistresses and their children, which are their dearest comforts, and the only thing that makes them endure life. Separated from this only consolation to men in affliction, they pine away, and sicken, and frequently desert, or at least they work but with reluctance and carelessness.

Moreover, by securing the payment of one creditor, several would infallibly be ruined. The most intelligent and the most active planters, deprived of part of the hands requisite for the labours of their plantations, would soon become insolvent, and would continue so for ever.

Honour hath appeared to some people a more effectual resource than any other. Stamp, say they, but a mark of infamy upon the fraudulent debtor, render him incapable of ever exercising any public office, and we need not apprehend he will sport with this prejudice. The most rapacious of men, and especially the American planters, sacrifice a part of their lives to hard labour, with no other view than to enjoy their fortune. But there is no enjoyment for a man who is branded with infamy. Observe only how punctually all debts of honour are paid. It is not an excess of delicacy, it is not a love of justice that brings back the ruined gamester, within four-and-twenty hours, to the feet of his creditor, who, perhaps, is no better than a sharper ; it is the sense of honour ; it is the dread of being excluded from society. But in what age, and what period, do we hear invoke the sacred name of honour ? Should not the government set the example of that justice, the practice of which it means to inculcate ? Is it possible that public opinion should disgrace individuals for actions which the state openly commits ? When infamy has insinuated itself into families, into great houses, into the highest places, even into the camp and the sanctuary, can there be any sense of shame remaining ? What man will henceforth be jealous of his honour, while those who are called men of honour know of no other than that of being rich to get places, or of getting places to grow rich ; when a man

must cringe in order to rise ; please the great and the women to serve the state ; and when the art of being agreeable, implies at least an indifference for every virtue ? Shall honour, which seems to be banished from Europe, take refuge in America ?

The court of Versailles, perpetually led astray by the administrators of its colonies, have always appeared desirous that the payment of debts should depend entirely upon their arbitrary decision. They have never comprehended that this was establishing a system of tyranny in the New World. Ignorant, capricious, interested, or vindictive chiefs, may select, at pleasure, those debtors whom it may suit them to ruin. It is equally in their power to commit injustices towards the creditors. It will neither be the oldest, nor the most distressed, nor the most honest, creditor whom they will cause to be paid ; but the most powerful, the best protected, the most active, or the most violent. Authority ought not to take place of justice, nor probity or virtue of the law, in any part of the world, or from any motive whatever ; because all authority is liable to corruption, and because there is no probity or virtue which may not be shaken.

Two centuries, wasted in attempts, experiments, and combinations, must have convinced the French ministry, that the calamity which we here deplore, can only be put a stop to by clear and plain regulations, easily carried into execution. When creditors shall be able, without delays, without expence, and without restraining formalities, to take possession of all the property of their debtors ; then only will order be established. This severe act of jurisprudence should not have a retroactive effect. Humanity and policy will indicate the proper medium to be adopted for the liquidation of old debts. But with respect to new engagements, nothing should screen them from the rigour of the law that should be enacted.

Very bitter remonstrances will certainly be made at first. Where shall we find, will it be said, a planter so rash as to attempt an undertaking of any consequence, when he shall be certain of ruin, if his labour should not be seconded by chance and by the elements, upon the day appointed for him to fulfil his engagements ? The dread of misery and of ignominy will seize upon the minds of all men. Hencefor-

ward there will be no loans, no business, no circulation. Industry will degenerate into sloth, and credit will be destroyed by the very system adopted to re-establish it.

We have no doubt but that this would be the language of the colonists in the first instance; but in the end, and even in a short time, this arrangement would be most agreeable to those who had been at first the most violent against it. Informed by public knowledge and by experience, they would be sensible that the facility of putting off payment had been burthensome to them, and that they had found credit only by purchasing it upon such terms as were sufficient to balance the risk of lending to them.

The indulgencies which might have been proper in the early state of the colonies, would, in our days, become an inexcusable weakness. These settlements will never thrive as they ought to do, unless the means of cultivation be multiplied; which they will not be, till the creditor be enabled to put an entire confidence in his debtor. The system which is favourable to want of skill, to rash undertakings, and to dishonesty, must be overturned; and the face of all things will soon be changed. The European merchant, who at present only advances trifling sums to the American planter, and that with great apprehensions, will not find a better way of employing his capital. With greater assistances, other plantations would be formed; and the old ones will acquire a new value. The French islands will at length arrived to that degree of fortune, to which the richness of their soil hath in vain for so long a time invited them. If, notwithstanding the progress of knowledge, the court of Versailles should not be able to contrive a system of legislation, more wise and more perfect than that which is established in the English and in the Dutch possessions, they must not hesitate to adopt the same. Already have these three powers shewn other marks of conformity in their principles. They have alike concentrated the connections of their American settlements in the mother country.

Has the mother country, in compelling the islands to deliver their produce only to herself, secured their exportation?

ALL the colonies have not had the same origin. Some took their rise from the restless spirit of some tribes of barbarians, who, after having long wandered through desert countries, fixed themselves at last, from mere weariness, in any one where they might form a nation. Others, driven out of their own territory by some powerful enemy, or allured by chance to a better climate than their own, have removed thither, and shared the lands with the natives. An excess of population, an abhorrence for tyranny, factions, and revolutions, have induced other citizens to quit their native country, and to go and build new cities in foreign climes. The spirit of conquest made some soldiers settle in the countries they had subdued, to secure the property of them to themselves. None of these colonies were first formed with a view to trade. Even those that were founded by Tyre, Carthage, and Marseilles, which were all commercial republics, were only meant for necessary retreats upon barbarous coasts, and for marts, where ships that were come from different ports, and tired with a long voyage, reciprocally made their exchanges.

The conquest of America gave the first idea of a new kind of settlement, the basis of which is agriculture. The governments that founded those colonies, chose that such of their subjects as they sent thither, should not have it in their power to consume any thing but what they drew from the mother country, or to sell the produce of their lands to any other state. This double obligation has appeared to all nations to be consonant to the law of nature, independent of all conventions, and self-evident. They have not looked upon an exclusive intercourse with their own colonies as an immoderate compensation for the expences of settling and preserving them. This has constantly been the system of Europe relative to America.

France, like other nations, was always desirous that its settlements of the New World should send all their productions to the mother country, and should receive all their provisions from thence. But, in the present state of things, this arrangement is impracticable.

The islands are in want of flour, wine, oil, linen, stuffs,

household furniture, and every thing that contributes to the conveniencies of life. They must receive all these things from the mother country, which even supposing a system of indefinite liberty, would sell them exclusively, except flour, which North America might furnish at a cheaper rate.

But these possessions are likewise in want of negroes to carry on the labours. The mother country hath hitherto supplied this deficiency in a very imperfect manner only. It therefore becomes necessary to have recourse to the English, who are alone able to fill up the void. The only precaution which would be proper to be taken, would be, to establish, perhaps, upon the succours received from these rivals, a duty that would deprive them of the advantages which particular circumstances give them over the French merchants.

Lastly, in the present state of the colonies, cattle, salt fish, and foreign woods, are become absolutely necessary for them. It must be considered as an impossibility to convey them from Europe; and it is only from New England that they can obtain these means which are essentially requisite for the culture of their plantations.

Smuggling, more or less tolerated, hath been hitherto the only resource of the planters; but this method, beside being too expensive, is dishonest and insufficient. It is time that prohibitive laws should give way to the imperious law of necessity. Government should point out the ports where foreign productions may be received; they should settle the provisions which should be allowed to be carried; they should form judicious institutions, which might give a degree of consistency to this arrangement; and advantages will be found to accrue from this new system, exempt from every inconvenience: a trial was made of it in 1765. If this fortunate plan was given up, it was on account of that fatal instability which hath for a long time disgraced the naval operations of France; it will therefore be resumed, and at the same time the colonies will be secure of a mart for all their productions.

These settlements send annually to the mother country, besides what they keep for their own consumption, a hundred thousand hogsheads of molasses; the value of which may be from nine to ten millions, [from 375,000*l.* to 416,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] From ill-judged motives of interest,

perhaps, she hath deprived them and herself of this benefit ; from an apprehension of injuring the sale of her own brandy. The brandies drawn from sugar, always inferior to those extracted from wine, can only be for the use of poor rations, or of the lower class of people in the rich ones. They will never be preferred to any but malt spirits, and these are not distilled in France. There will always be a demand for the French brandies, even in the islands, for the use of that class of men who can afford to pay for them. The government, therefore, can never too soon retract so unjust and so fatal an error, and ought to admit molasses and rum into its ports, to be consumed there, or wherever else they may be wanted. Nothing would more extend their consumption, than to authorise French navigators to carry them directly to the foreign markets. This indulgence ought even to be extended to the whole produce of the colonies. As an opinion that clashes with so many interests and so many prejudices may probably be contested, it will be proper to establish it on clear principles.

The French islands furnish the mother country with sugars, coffee, cotton, indigo, and other commodities, that are partly consumed at home, and partly disposed of in foreign countries, which return in exchange either silver, or other articles that are wanted. These islands receive from the mother country clothes, provisions, and instruments of husbandry. Such is the twofold destination of the colonies. In order to fulfil it, they must be rich. In order to be rich, they must grow large crops, and be able to dispose of them at the best price : and, that this price may be kept up, the sale of them must be as general as possible. To obtain this, it must be made entirely free. In order to make it as free as possible, it must be clogged with no formalities, no expences, no labours, no needless encumbrances. These truths, which may be proved from their close connection with each other, must determine whether it be advantageous that the trade of the colonies should be subjected to the delays and expence of a staple in France.

These intermediate expences must necessarily fall either upon the consumer or upon the planter. If upon the former, he will consume less, because his means do not increase in proportion to his expences ; if upon the latter, as his produce brings in less, he will be less able to make the

necessary advances for the next crop, and of course his land^s will yield less. The evident progress of these destructive consequences is so little attended to, that every day we hear people confidently say, that merchandize, before it is consumed, must pass through many hands, and undergo many charges, both for handicraft and carriage; and that as these charges employ and maintain a number of persons, they are conducive to the population and strength of a state. Men are so blinded by prejudice, as not to see, that if it be advantageous that commodities, before they are consumed, should undergo a twofold expence, this advantage will still be increased, to the greater emolument of the nation, if this expence should amount to four, eight, twelve, or thirty, times more. Then, indeed, all nations might break up their highways, fill up their canals, prohibit the navigation of their rivers; they might even exclude animals from the labours of the field, and employ none but men in these works, in order to add to the expences that precede the consumption of the produce. Yet such are the absurdities we must maintain, if we admit the false principle we are now opposing.

But political truths must be long canvassed before they are perceived. I shall advance, without fearing to be contradicted, that the transcendant parts of geometry have neither the depth nor the subtilty of this species of arithmetic. There is nothing possible in mathematics, which the genius of Newton, or of some of his successors, might not have flattered itself to accomplish. But I shall not say as much of them, with respect to the matters we are now treating of. At first sight we imagine that we had but one difficulty to solve: but this difficulty soon brings on another; that again a third, and thus we proceed *ad infinitum*; and we perceive that we must either give up the work, or embrace at once the whole immense system of social order, without which we shall obtain only an incomplete and defective result. The data and the calculations vary according to the nature of the place, its productions, its specie, its resources, its connections, its laws, its customs, its taste, its commerce, and its manners. Where shall we find the man sufficiently informed to embrace all these elements? Where the mind sufficiently accurate to appreciate them only at their proper value? All informations concerning

the different branches of society, are no more than the branches of that tree, which constitutes the science of the man engaged in public life. He must be an ecclesiastic, a military man, a magistrate, a financier, a merchant, and a husbandman. He must have weighed all the advantages and obstacles which he is to expect from passion, from rival pretensions, and from private interest. With all the knowledge that may be acquired without genius, and with all the genius that may have been bestowed upon him without knowledge, he is instantly led into mistakes. It is not therefore surprising, that so many errors should have gained credit among the people, who never repeat any thing but what they have heard; that so many should have prevailed among speculators, who suffer themselves to be led away by the spirit of system, and who scruple not to conclude a general truth, from some particular success; that so many mistakes should happen among men of business, who are all of them more or less inflamed to the routine of their predecessors, and more or less restrained by the ruinous consequences of attempting any thing contrary to custom; in a word, that so many faults should be committed among statesmen, who by their birth, or by favour, are brought up to important places, to which they come with profound ignorance, that leaves them at the discretion of corrupt subalterns, who either deceive or mislead them. In every well-regulated society, there ought to be no matter upon which a freedom of discussion should not be allowed. The more weighty and the more difficult this matter is, the more necessary doth this discussion become. Can we then have a more important, a more complicated subject than that of government? Or could any court, that was fond of truth, do better than to encourage all men to exercise their thoughts upon it? And should we not be authorised to think of that court, who should forbid this study, that we must either distrust their operations, or conclude them to be bad? The true result of a prohibitive edict upon this point, might very properly be contained in the following words, *the sovereign forbids that it should be demonstrated to him; that his minister is either a fool or a knave, for it is his pleasure that he should be either the one or the other, without any notice being taken of it.* The council of Versailles, long blinded by that darkness in which they suffered their nation to remain, had

not yet acquired a sufficient degree of knowledge to discover what kind of administration was fittest for the colonies ; and they are still equally ignorant of the form of government best calculated to make them prosper.

THE French colonies, settled by profligate men, who fled from the restraints or punishments of the law, seemed at first to stand in need of nothing but a strict police ; they were therefore committed to chiefs who had an unlimited authority. The spirit of intrigue, natural to all courts, but more especially familiar to a nation where gallantry gives the women an universal ascendant, has at all times filled the higher posts in America with worthless men, loaded with debts and vices. The ministry, from some sense of shame, and the fear of raising such men where their disgrace was known, have sent them beyond sea, to improve or retrieve their fortunes, among people who were ignorant of their misconduct. An ill-judged compassion, and that mistaken maxim of courtiers, that villany is necessary, and villains are useful, made them deliberately sacrifice the peace of the planters, the safety of the colonies, and the very interests of the state, to a set of infamous persons only fit to be imprisoned. These rapacious and dissolute men sowed the seeds of all that was good and laudable, and checked the progress of that prosperity which was rising spontaneously.

Arbitrary power carries along with it so subtle a poison, that even those men who went over with honest intentions, were soon corrupted. If ambition, avarice, and pride, had not begun to infect them, they would not have been proof against flattery, which never fails to raise its meanness upon general slavery, and to advance its own fortune by public calamities.

The few governors who escaped corruption, meeting with no support in an arbitrary administration, were continually committing mistakes. Men are to be governed by laws, and not by men. If the governors be deprived of this common rule, this standard of their judgments, all right, all safety, and all civil liberty, will be extinct. Nothing will then be seen but contradictory decisions, transient and opposite regulations and orders, which, for want of sen-

*Is the authority
in the French
islands committed
to proper persons.*

damental maxims, will have no connection with each other. If the code of laws were cancelled, even in the best constituted empire, it would soon appear that justice alone was not sufficient to govern it well. The wisest men would be inadequate to such a task. As they would not all be of the same mind, and as each of them would not always be in the same disposition, the state would soon be subverted. This kind of confusion was perpetual in the French colonies, and the more so, as the governors made but a short stay in one place, and were recalled before they had time to take cognizance of any thing. After they had proceeded without a guide for three years, in a new country, and upon unformed plans of police and laws, these rulers were replaced by others, who, in as short a space, had not time to form any connection with the people they were to govern, nor to ripen their projects into that justice which, when tempered with mildness, can alone secure the execution of them. This want of experience, and of precedents, so much intimidated one of these absolute magistrates, that, out of delicacy, he would not venture to decide upon the common occurrences. Not but that he was aware of the inconveniencies of his irresolution; but, though an able man, he did not think himself qualified to be a legislator, and therefore did not choose to usurp the authority of one.

Yet these disorders might easily have been prevented, by substituting an equitable legislation, firm, and independent of private will, to a military government, violent in itself, and adapted only to critical and perilous times. But this scheme, which has often been proposed, was disapproved by the governors, jealous of absolute power; which, formidable in itself, is always odious in a subject. These slaves, escaped from the secret tyranny of the court, were remarkably attached to that form of justice which prevails in Asiatic governments, by which they kept even their own dependents in awe. The reformation was rejected even by some virtuous governors, who did not consider, that, by reserving to themselves the right of doing good, they left it in the power of their successors to do ill with impunity. All exclaimed against a plan of legislation that tended to lessen the dependence of the people; and the court was weak enough to give way to their insinuation and advice, from a

consequence of that propensity to arbitrary power natural to princes and their ministers. They thought they provided sufficiently for their colonies, by giving them an intendant to balance the power of the governor.

These distant settlements, which, till then, had groaned under the yoke of one proprietor only, now became a prey to two, equally dangerous by their division and their union. When they were at variance they divided the minds of the people, sowed discord among their adherents, and kindled a kind of civil war. The rumour of their dissensions was at length brought to Europe, where each party had its favourers, who were animated by pride or interest to support them in their posts. When they agreed, either because their good or bad intentions happened to be the same, or because the one had got an entire ascendant over the other, the colonists were in a worse condition than ever. Whatever oppression these victims laboured under, their complaints were never heard in the mother country, who looked upon the harmony that subsisted between her delegates, as the most certain proof of a faultless administration.

The fate of the French colonies is not much improved. Their governors, besides having the disposal of the regular troops, have a right to insist the inhabitants; to order them to what works they think proper; to employ them as they think proper in time of war, and even to make use of them for conquest. Intrusted with absolute authority, and desirous of exerting all the powers that can establish or extend it, they take upon themselves the cognizance of civil debts. The debtor is summoned, thrown into prison, or into a dungeon, and compelled to pay without any other formality; and this is what they call the service, or the military department. The intendants have the sole management and disposal of the finances, and generally order the collecting of them. They inquire into all causes, both civil and criminal; whether justice has not yet taken cognizance of them, or whether they have already been brought before the superior tribunals; and this is what they call administration. The governors and intendants jointly grant the lands that have not yet been given away, and determined, a few years ago, all differences that arose respecting the old possessions. This arrangement placed the fortunes of all the colonists in their hands, or in those of their clerks

and dependents ; and consequently made all property precarious, and occasioned the utmost confusion.

In mechanics, the further the resisting powers are removed from the centre, the more the moving force must be increased ; in like manner, we are told, the colonies cannot be secured any otherwise than by a harsh and absolute government. If so, Sir William Petty was in the right to disapprove of these sort of settlements. It would be better that the earth should remain unpeopled, or thinly inhabited, than that some powers should be extended to the misfortune of the people. It is incumbent upon France to invalidate this system of an Englishman against colonies, by improving more and more in the method of governing them. That enlightened spirit which distinguishes the present age, whatever may be the assertion of those who attribute to the contempt of certain prejudices the vices inseparable from luxury, and to the freedom of thinking and writing, those corrupt manners that arise from the passions of the great, and from the abuse of power : that enlightened spirit, I say, which still supports and guides the nation, while morality is little attended to, will restore the court of Versailles to those judicious principles which we have so often pointed out to them. If any person hath been offended by them, he need only be questioned, and it will be found that he is some vile adulator of the great, or some inferior person attached by his situation or by interest to the administration of which he is the panegyrist ; we may conclude, that he hath not the least idea of the duty which a citizen owes to his country. Shall I be considered as the accomplice of a villain, if I should not call out when I see him throwing a lighted torch into the house of a fellow-citizen ; and shall not my silence be deemed culpable, when I see the whole empire threatened with a conflagration ? It is not the subject who keeps his sovereign in the dark respecting the dangers of his situation, who can be called a faithful subject ; it is he who acquaints him of it with frankness at the risk of incurring his displeasure. But it is urged, why do not you address yourself to those who govern the kingdom, rather than to the public ! Can those who govern it be approached ? Would they listen to you ? Do they not think that all knowledge is centered in them ? Do they judge for themselves ? Would not the most im-

portant speculations be sent back to offices and submitted to the decision of a clerk, who would not fail to disapprove them, either from ignorance, from vanity, or from some other less secret and more vile motive. It is not certain that I should be heard, even if my voice were assisted by a multitude of other voices. Let me therefore be allowed to speak. Let me be allowed to tell my country what can raise her possessions in the New World, to that degree of prosperity and of happiness of which they are susceptible.

Few alterations will be found necessary, with regard to what concerns public worship; it hath been made subordinate as much as possible to civil authority. Its ministers are monks, whose appearance of gravity, and whose singular dress, make more impression upon the ignorant and superstitious negroes, than could be expected from the most sublime moral precepts of religion. The allurements of novelty, so powerful in France, had a few years ago suggested a project of substituting bishops and a numerous clergy to these convenient pastors. In vain had all men united in rejecting a body of clergy, formidable by their ambition, their avarice, and their pretensions. Had not the turbulent and unskilful minister, who had formed this destructive plan, been disgraced, the French colonies would have been tormented by a calamity, still greater than that which they have experienced for so long a time from legislative authority.

Changes which ought to be made in the administration of the French islands.

These great settlements were founded by chance, either fortunate or unfortunate, a little before the middle of the last century. There was at that time no fixed idea respecting the countries of the New World. For this reason the customs adopted at Paris, and the criminal laws of the kingdom, were chosen for their regulation. Judicious men have since that been well aware, that this kind of jurisprudence could not be suitable to a country of slavery, to a climate, to morals, to cultures, and to possessions, which have no kind of resemblance to ours; but these reflections of some individuals have had no influence upon the operations of government. Far from correcting the defects of

these first institutions, they have added to the absurdity of the principles, embarrassments, confusion, and a multiplicity of forms, and consequently no justice hath been rendered.

Things will remain in the same state till a system of legislation peculiarly adapted to the islands shall render juridical decisions possible and even easy : but this important work cannot be done in France. Leave to the colonists assembled the care of representing their own wants, let them be suffered to form themselves such a code as they shall think most suitable to their situation. When this great labour shall have been executed with mature deliberation, it should be submitted to the deepest and most rigorous disquisitions. The sanction of government ought not to be granted to it, till every doubt be removed with respect to its utility and to its perfection. There will then be no fear of a want of good magistrates. The laws will be so precise, so clear, and so well adapted to business, that the tribunals will no longer be accused of ignorance, of want of application, or of dishonesty.

From this new order of things an exact police would arise. This method of keeping the citizens in order is easy in Europe. A father does the office of a censor in his own family ; he watches over his wife, his children, and his domestics. The proprietor, or the principal tenant, exerts the same authority in his house ; the manufacturer or the tradesman in his warehouse, or in his workshop. One neighbour is a kind of inspector over another. Associations of men jealous of their honour, keep a vigilant eye over the conduct and actions of their members ; no man of bad character is received among them, and they expel those who have disgraced themselves. A dangerous man is soon found out, and every door is shut against him. There is a tribunal of honour, and another of scandal. Morality exerts a kind of judicature which no one can avoid. Where is the man, who is not more or less restrained by the public opinion ? All these species of authority derogate from the functions of government. America, full of insulated individuals, without country, and without relations, who are for ever changing place, and incessantly renewed, and who are urged to the boldest enterprises by their thirst after

riches : America requires a more active, a more steady, and a more circumstantial, administration.

Instead of this, one officer, under the name of King's lieutenant, residing in a port, or in a small town, was for a long while solely intrusted with that important office in the French islands. This man was a petty tyrant, who distressed the planters, who extorted money from trade, and who preferred the selling of a pardon to the prevention of misdemeanours. For some years past the commanders of the militia have in each district been intrusted with the care of maintaining public tranquillity, under the inspection of the chief of the colony. This new arrangement is not so defective as the former, but it is still too arbitrary. Let us indulge in the pleasing expectation, that the same code by which the fortune of each individual shall be put under the protection of the laws, will also secure his liberty.

At this period trade will be better regulated than it hath yet been. The French merchants do not go themselves to the islands, but they send there cargoes more or less valuable. Those which are not of much value, are commonly distributed by the captains of the ships for ready money. The most important of them, such as those which carry slaves, are mostly delivered upon credit, and agents are fixed in those settlements for the collecting of the money. The payments are seldom made at the appointed time ; and this want of punctuality hath always occasioned disputes between the colonies and the mother country. Administration have for a long time been endeavouring to put an end to these eternal discords. Might there not be a register kept in each jurisdiction, in which every debt should be noted in the same order in which it had been contracted ? When intelligent persons should determine, that the debtor's estate was mortgaged for more than half its value, every creditor should be allowed to put it up to sale.

This arrangement, though wise and necessary, would certainly displease the colonists ; but they would soon be comforted, respecting what they might at first have considered as an unfortunate circumstance, should that rigour be moderated by a better administration of the finances. Government were cruel enough, even at the first origin of the colonies, to exact a tribute from those unfortunate

people who went to the New World to seek their subsistence. Stronger contributions were required of them, in proportion as their labours and the fruits of their industry were multiplied; and yet this enormous weight, with which their commodities, their consumptions, and their slaves, were overloaded, scarcely excites a feeble remonstrance. The complaints are generally founded upon the tyrannical manner in which the public revenue is collected, and upon the pernicious uses to which it is applied. It is alleged, that their treasury thinks itself exhausted by the expences which are required for the preservation of the islands. They themselves offer to defray all these expences in the most ample manner, provided that the taxes be regulated and disposed of by the national assemblies. The troops will then be more regularly paid, and the fortifications kept in better order, under the inspection of government itself. Disencumbered from that multitude of officers, who, under the name of the staff, exhaust them; of those legions of rapacious farmers of the revenue who oppress them incessantly and beyond measure, the colonies will attend to their improvement. Convenient roads will be opened on all sides, the morasses will be dried up, a bed will be digged for the torrents, that of the rivers will be repaired, and bridges will be constructed to secure the communications. The young creoles will receive upon their own soil a proper education, which they did not obtain even by crossing the seas. In a word, there will be a body appointed, which shall be authorised to pursue, even to the foot of the throne, that despotic rage which so frequently seizes upon those vain or corrupt men, who are chosen by intrigue or by ignorance to govern these distant regions.

Nothing appears to be more consonant to the ends of sound policy, than to allow these islanders the right of governing themselves, provided it be in subordination to the mother country; nearly in the same manner as a boat follows all the directions of the ship it is fastened to. It will, perhaps, be objected, that the people in those remote islands being continually renewed by the fluctuation of commerce, this will naturally bring in a number of worthless men; and that it will be long before we can expect to see those manners and that sagacity among them, which will be produc-

tive of public spirit, and of that dignity which is requisite to support the weight of affairs and the interests of a nation. This objection might have some foundation, if we attended merely to the character of those Europeans who are driven to America by their wants or their vices; who, by thus transporting themselves, either by choice or from other motives, are strangers everywhere; commonly corrupted by the want of laws, ill-supplied by an arbitrary police; by that depraved taste for dominion, which results from the abuse of slavery; and by the dazzling lustre of a great fortune, which makes them forget their former obscurity. But this class of men ought to have no share in the administration, which should be wholly committed to proprietors, mostly born in the colonies: for justice is the natural consequence of property; and none are more interested in the good government of a country, than those who are intitled by their birth to the largest possessions in it. These creoles, who have naturally a great share of penetration, a frankness of character, an elevation of soul, and a certain love of justice that arises from these valuable dispositions, would be so sensible of the marks of esteem and confidence which would be shewn them by the mother country, in intrusting them with the interior management of their own, that they would grow fond of that fertile soil, take a pride in improving it, and be happy in introducing all the comforts of a civilized society. Instead of that antipathy to France, which is a reflection upon her ministers, and upbraids them with their severity, we should see in the colonies that attachment which paternal kindness always inspires to children. Instead of that secret eagerness which, in time of war, makes them readily submit to a foreign yoke, we should see them uniting their efforts to prevent or repulse an invasion. Fear will restrain men under the immediate eye of a powerful and formidable master; but affection alone can command them at a distance. This is, perhaps, the only spring that acts upon the frontier provinces of an extensive kingdom; while the indolent and rapacious inhabitants of the metropolis are kept in awe by authority. Attachment to the sovereign is a principle which cannot be too much encouraged or too much extended; but if it be neither merited nor returned, he will not enjoy it long. No more joy will then appear in public festivals, no transports of exultation, no involun-

tary acclamations will be heard at the sight of the beloved idol. Curiosity will bring a throng wherever there is a public spectacle; but contentment will not appear in any countenance. A sullen discontent will arise, and spread from one province to another; and from the mother country to the colonies. When the fortunes of all men are injured or threatened at once, the alarm and the commotion becomes general. Exertions of authority, multiplied by the imprudence of those who first venture upon them, occasion a general alarm, and fall successively upon all bodies of men. The avengers of crimes, and supporters of the rights of the colonists, are brought up even from America, and confined like malefactors in the prisons of Europe. The weapons of government, which seemed useless against the enemy, are directed against these valuable subjects of the state. Those people, who could not be defended in time of war, are alarmed in time of peace. The French ministry have never granted to their possessions in the New World the support requisite to preserve them from ravages or from invasion, and they will never fulfil this obligation, unless they increase in the Old World their arsenals, their manufactures, and their slaves. Philosophers of all countries, friends of mankind, pardon a French writer who endeavours to excite his country to raise a formidable navy. It is in order to secure the tranquillity of the world that he wishes to see that same equilibrium established in all the seas, which constitutes at present the security of the continent.

*Can France acquire
a military navy?*

*Doth it suit her to
have one? What
measures must be taken
for that purpose?*

IF it should be doubted whether France can aspire to that kind of power, we have only to consider its position. Sufficiently extensive to prevent it from being dependent upon any of the surrounding powers, and yet so fortunately limited as not to be weakened by its extent, this monarchy is situated in the centre of Europe, between the ocean and the Mediterranean. It can transport all its productions from one sea to another, without passing under the threatening cannon of Gibraltar, or under the insulting flag of the Barbary powers. Most of its provinces are watered by rivers, or intersected by canals, which secure the communication between its in-

land countries and its ports, and between its ports and its inland countries. Its neighbours are, fortunately, not able to furnish their own subsistence, or carry on a trade that is merely passive. The temperature of its climate procures to it the inestimable advantage of sending out and receiving its ships at all seasons of the year. The depth of its harbours enables it to give to its ships the form the most proper for swiftness and security.

Can France be in need of objects and of materials for exportation? Its productions, of the Old and of the New World, are eagerly sought after by all nations: but it is more especially by its manufactures, and by its fashions, that it hath subdued Europe, and some parts of the other hemisphere. The nations are fascinated, and will ever remain so. The endeavours which have everywhere been made to get rid of so ruinous a tribute, by imitations of this foreign industry, have nowhere had the expected success. The fertility of invention will ever be beforehand with the quickness of imitation; and the agility of a people, in whose hands every thing assumes a youthful appearance, and who have the art of making every thing appear old among their neighbours, will deceive the jealousy and the avidity of those who endeavour to enter into a competition with them by imitation. How extensive might the navigation of an empire be, which furnishes to the other states the objects of their vanity, of their luxury, and of their voluptuousness?

Can the population of France be deemed inadequate to numerous armaments? It is well known at present, that this power reckons twenty-two millions of inhabitants. The reproach that is made them, that they have more sailors upon each of their ships than their rivals, is alone a sufficient proof that men are not wanted for the naval art, but that they are themselves deficient in it. Yet no people have ever received from nature more of that vivacity of genius, fit to improve the building of ships, or more of that dexterity of body, so well calculated to spare the time and expences of handicraft, by the simplicity and celerity of the means employed.

Is it because France cannot furnish from itself all sorts of naval stores, that it can be thought unable to have a maritime force? But are not her rivals likewise obliged to

have recourse for these things to the north of Europe, and even more than France herself? Doth their climate, their industry, and their colonies, furnish them with the same facility of completing their exchanges in the Baltic?

France hath therefore all the requisites necessary to become a truly naval power: but doth it suit her to entertain this ambitious idea?

For a long time, the only method known to acquire fortune and glory, was by numerous and well disciplined armies. The East and the West Indies were discovered; and this unforeseen event occasioned an astonishing revolution in the minds of all men. Perhaps a reasonable ambition would have been contented with obtaining, by the mode of exchange, the riches and the productions of these two extensive parts of the globe. The thirst of dominion, too common among nations, occasioned the ruinous and destructive system of conquests to be generally preferred. These immense regions were mostly subdued. Matters were carried still farther. The people who inhabited these new climates were either too weak or too indolent to serve as the instruments of the cupidity of an unjust invader. In several places, they were all either exterminated, or expelled from the countries that had given them birth, and Europeans, or African-slaves, were substituted to them, who multiplied the commodities, the germina of which they found there, and who established other cultures, which a new, fertile, and varied, soil could easily supply.

It was necessary to give some stability to these settlements. The restlessness of the nations which had divided these virgin regions, and the jealousy of those which had not enjoyed that advantage, were equally to be apprehended. A naval force alone could give consistence to the rising colonies, and even to those which were in the greatest forwardness. To preserve them from invasion, fleets were constructed and fitted out. At this remarkable period, the system of politics was entirely altered. The earth was in some measure subjected to the sea, and the great political strokes were stricken on the ocean.

France, less accustomed to serve as a guide, than to surpass its masters, beheld without emulation the rise of a new species of power. The navy did not even form any part of the too extensive projects of the ambitious Richelieu. It

was reserved to the monarch for whose grandeur he had paved the way, to make his flag respected in the two hemispheres. But this glory was of small duration. Lewis XIV, by his enterprises, irritated the whole continent, and, in order to resist the leagues which were formed there against him, was obliged to maintain innumerable armies. His kingdom soon became nothing more than a camp; and his frontiers were only a string of fortified places. The springs of the state were always kept in too high a degree of tension under this brilliant reign. One crisis was succeeded by another. At length the finances were in disorder, and in the impossibility of defraying all the expences, the sacrifice of the naval forces was thought, perhaps improperly, to be indispensable.

Since the end of a century, in which the nation sustained its disgraces, by the remembrance at least of its successes, and still kept Europe in awe by forty years of glory, cherished a government by which it had been honoured, and bade defiance to rivals whom it had humbled: since that period, France hath lost much of its pride, notwithstanding the acquisitions with which its territory hath been extended. A long peace would not have enervated her, if her forces, too long lavished in war, had been turned to the navy: but her naval powers have acquired no consistence. The avarice of one minister; the prodigality of another; the indolence of several; false notions; trifling interests; the intrigues of the court, by which government is guided; a series of vices and of faults; a number of obscure and despicable causes: all these circumstances have prevented the nation from becoming as powerful upon sea as it had been on the continent; at least from acquiring a balance, if not a preponderance, of power. Even the losses which France experienced in all parts of the globe, during the hostilities begun in 1756; the humiliations which she was obliged to submit to at the peace of 1763, did not restore a spirit of wisdom to the council that governed the nation, and did not turn their projects and their efforts towards the system of a formidable navy.

But what measures should France pursue, in order to create and maintain a naval force?

The first step to be taken, without which the others would become either useless or fatal, must be, to encourage

the mercantile branch of the navy. It is that alone which can form men, inured to the hardships of climates, to the fatigues of labour, and to the dangers of storms. This truth being once established, those innumerable shackles which have hitherto exclusively insured the exportation of the commodities of the kingdom to foreign nations, and which have even too often given up to them the coasting trade, will be taken off. We will not affirm, that an act of navigation, similar to that which hath occasioned the glory of England, would be suitable to France: but that crown ought at least to establish such regulations as might enable its subjects to share those benefits which the Swedes, the Danes, and the Dutch, come and take from them even in their own harbours.

This new order of things will never be established, till the naval trade shall emerge from that humiliating state into which it hath hitherto unfortunately been plunged. The laws forbid any navigator from commanding a trading vessel, till he shall have made three voyages upon a king's ship: after this trial, he may still be compelled to remain in the king's service during a time of war. The abject state in which he is kept in that service must necessarily excite an aversion for the sea in all men who have received any education, who enjoy some kind of fortunes, or who have some degree of spirit. Either these shameful fetters must be broken, or the French must give up the hopes of seeing the ocean covered with their numerous and rich armaments.

The state of oppression in which the sailors are kept, is another obstacle to the multiplication of expeditions. These men, who so essentially contribute to the opulence and to the strength of the kingdom, are inscribed in registers, and are instantly obliged to embark on-board of men of war, upon receiving orders from the ministry, for whatever time they shall choose, and at whatever stipend it may be thought proper to give them; nor are these hard terms in the least alleviated by any consideration either of talents or age. At the time even when they are not employed in the public service, they are not allowed to dispose of their industry and of their leisure, without the permission of an agent of government. This slavery averts from this necessary profession most of those whose inclination would otherwise

have led them to it, if it were not destructive of all kind of liberty. If these institutions were suppressed, or at least the severity of them were diminished, the harbours and the coasts of France would then be filled with sailors.

But who shall lead them on to action, and to the defence of their country? Seignelay decided that it should be the nobility, and his opinion hath been adopted ever since. Hath nature then exclusively granted to a nobleman a natural constitution, which cannot be affected by climate, by hunger, and by fatigue? Hath she exclusively granted to him the boldness that bids defiance to danger, and the coolness that surmounts it? Hath she given to him exclusively that genius which determines and insures victory? It is said, that opinion and prejudice inspire men of this rank with an ardour for glory, and an indifference for wealth, which are not to be found among other classes of men! What! is it in the midst of a corrupt court, is it among the rubbish of a ruined castle, that principles of elevation and of disinterestedness are to be preferably sought for? The son of a navigator, whose fortunate labours have been crowned with wealth, and who can have no other ambition than that of rendering his name illustrious, is no less powerfully excited to memorable actions and to great sacrifices, than that young nobleman who is constantly sheltering himself under the laurels of his ancestors. What period hath ever shewn, that a title which we are in possession of is a more powerful stimulus than one to which we aspire? What was the first person who deserved nobility before he had obtained it? If some of his illustrious descendants had been in his place, his children and his posterity would have remained in obscurity. True nobility was in the blood and in the destiny of man, before it existed upon parchment. To acquire it, it is necessary to have good fortune and merit: good fortune, which shall present occasions to us, and merit, by which we may improve them. All who have been ennobled in past ages, and all who shall be ennobled in future, have proved, and will hereafter prove, that this great road is open to a few men only; and that it is as easy to find a great mind under a plain dress, as a mean spirit under the decoration of a riband. Courage, virtue, and genius, belong to all ranks. But in order to ascertain this matter, let the career be laid open indiscriminately to all persons who

shall have received a decent education. Let them be embarked on-board men of war; let them take a few voyages under experienced commanders; let them be subjected to all the labours, and to all the self-denials, which this difficult profession requires. After these trials, let those who have shewn the greatest degree of spirit, of skill, of courage, and of emulation, be admitted into the royal navy.

The excellence of an art, which enables us sometimes to subdue the elements; the advantages of a profession, in which the opportunities of signalizing one's self are more frequent, and in which glory is the personal acquisition of every man, as soon as he hath obtained the command of the smallest vessel; all these reasons will induce them to study, to reflect, and especially to be always manœuvring; for in this profession, the most learned theory must be constantly accompanied with practice. Either in action, or in simple navigation, resolutions must be so quick, that they shall appear rather as the result of feeling than of reflection. The sea officer is more particularly in need of those decisive thoughts, of those sudden illuminations, as they have been so well described by a sublime orator, in his eulogium of a great captain: and these strokes of instinct and talents, to speak in a less elevated style, must be sooner acquired by practice than by theory.

This idea of continual practice the French navy are utterly strangers to. Loose armaments, voyages of a day, in which the time of returning into port is known at the time of going out of it: coasts which are visited with as little attention as those countries through which a man travels past: colonies, of which we know as little when we leave them as we did at our arrival: expeditions, in which a speedy return is the only prevailing idea, and where the mind is constantly absorbed in attention to former habits: ships, which are considered as prisons, and which are quit-
ted with transport, without being acquainted either with their defects or perfections. O Frenchmen! O my fellow-citizens! this is exactly a true picture! such hath been hitherto the deplorable employment of the naval forces of our country.

To these successive armaments of a few solitary frigates, the transient expedition of which is of no real utility, let us substitute permanent squadrons, that shall remain three

years, or more, in all the latitudes of the Old and of the New World, where we have any settlements, or where we carry on an extensive trade. Let these instructive cruizes constantly employ one half of our inferior vessels, and some ships of the line. Then the officers who remain in the profession merely on account of the facility of fulfilling the duties of it, will retire; and those who persevere in this perilous and honourable employment will then acquire information, experience, and a fondness for that element, upon which they expect to obtain glory and fortune. Subalterns then growing emulous to please superiors destined to command them for a length of time, will learn subordination. The crews, trained up with care to the service, and instructed in the manœuvres by the captains who are to reap the fruits of all their trouble, will then fight with more resolution and with better skill. Europe hath appeared astonished that the French, who were worthy rivals of the English at the beginning of the last wars, had lost in time that honourable equality. Several causes have occasioned this revolution: the principal of them, and which hath not been attended to, is, that the French have had fresh sailors every campaign, and that their rivals have always kept the same till the termination of hostilities.

The establishment of stationary squadrons should be followed by other innovations of no less importance. The corps of the navy, at present too numerous, and burthened with useless and idle members, ought to be proportioned to the number of ships and of armaments. Those fatal departments, which excite jealousy without emulation, and which, by hereditary hatred, often occasion the miscarriage of the best contrived projects, must be abolished. Rank; which everywhere, and in all ages, hath stifled genius and talents, will cease to preside over the promotions and the rewards. Among the too great number of ranks it is necessary to pass through, several must be suppressed, in order that it may be possible for a man to acquire a command before the time prescribed by nature for quitting it. If it be thought necessary to preserve the different classes of officers, the direction of them will be altered and better regulated. The admirals, whose strength, courage, and activity, shall be diminished, either by age, by labour, or by the wounds they may have received, must form a tribunal, which shall

direct the choice, the preservation, and the employment, of the naval stores. It must be the business of this tribunal to regulate admission into the navy, to determine the promotions, to bestow the command, to settle the cruizes, and direct as much as possible all the operations. Such will hereafter be the council of a minister, who, ignorant of his functions, situated at the distance of a hundred leagues from the sea, devoted, either from inclination or necessity, to the intrigues of a tempestuous court, hath been constantly, to the present time, the sport of a few obscure, ignorant, and interested, adventurers.

In proportion as these plans of reformation which we have been tracing shall be carried into execution, the ships, which were growing rotten in a state of inaction, will be repaired, and others will be constructed. France will soon acquire numerous fleets. But where shall the resources be found to put them in action?

Let those two magnificent or useless edifices, the maintaining of which becomes ruinous, be demolished: let there be a stop put to the dishonesty which hath but too commonly prevailed in the purchase of naval stores, and to the negligence with which they have been hitherto taken care of: let those useless hands, which protection hath multiplied in our arsenals, be dismissed: let the measures of administration be rendered more simple, by introducing justice and punctuality in our payments: let the crews of the ships, which all disinterested persons acknowledge to be too numerous, be diminished: let all those officers, who are not employed at sea in the service of the state, be reduced to half pay: let every species of luxury, delicacy, and voluptuousness, which enervates our defenders and ruins our squadrons, be abolished: let the refitting and repairing of our ships become less frequently necessary. After all these alterations, the funds at present set apart for the navy will be found sufficient to put this essential branch of our power upon a respectable footing. There is even a very simple method of raising it still higher, without any additional expence, which I shall now point out.

France hath formed colonies in the New World, from which it annually receives to the amount of 130,000,000 of livres [5,416,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] in commodities. The loss of so considerable a produce would leave an immense va-

cancy in its specie, in its population, in its industry, and in its public revenue. The importance of preserving these rich settlements hath been understood, and in order to accomplish it, recourse hath been had to battalions and fortresses. Experience hath proved the insufficiency of these means. The defence of these colonies belongs, and must exclusively belong, to the navy. The islands must therefore be put under its protection, and the expences incurred for the insufficient protection of them must be turned into its treasury : then will the ordinary funds of the navy of France be found sufficient for the purpose of carrying on its operations with dignity and advantage.

Such are the expectations of Europe. She will not think her liberty secured, till a flag shall be seen displayed upon the ocean that shall not tremble before that of Great Britain. The wishes of the nations are now united in favour of that power which may be able to defend them against the pretensions of one single people to the universal monarchy of the seas ; and at this present period there is none but France that can free them from this anxiety. The system of equilibrium requires, therefore, that the court of Versailles should increase their navy, more especially as they cannot do it without diminishing their land forces. Their influence being then divided between the two elements, will no longer be formidable on either, except to those who should be desirous of disturbing the harmony.

Before I die, may this great revolution, already begun, be completed ; together with other reformatations which I have pointed out. Then shall I have obtained the true reward of my vigils. Then shall I exclaim : it is not in vain that I have observed, reflected, and laboured. Then shall I address myself to heaven, and say : “ dispose of me at
“ present according to thy will, for mine eyes have seen
“ the splendour of my country, and the liberty of the seas
“ restored unto all nations !”

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